United Nations A/68/PV.96

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

96th plenary meeting
Friday, 13 June 2014, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 119 (*continued*)

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/841)

Draft resolution (A/68/L.50)

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): While Ukraine aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (A/68/PV.94), we find it appropriate to make a statement from our national perspective.

The fourth review of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2014 is an important step forward. Ukraine fully supports the United Nations in playing its key role in the prevention of and fight against terrorism and notes with appreciation the capacity-building activities undertaken by United Nations entities, including the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force working in coordination with other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, to assist Member States, upon their request, in implementing the Strategy.

Ukraine appreciates the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy as a global counter-terrorism framework, which includes not only law enforcement and other security measures, but also measures to ensure respect for human rights and to address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Ukraine notes with appreciation the up-to-date relevance of the fourth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which, in the light of the emerging threats and evolving trends in international terrorism, is crucial for raising awareness in Member States and increasing their preparedness for tackling the new forms of terror. We share Member States' concerns about the increase in incidents of kidnapping and hostage-taking with the aim of raising funds, and about the direct engagement of foreign fighters and mercenaries in terrorist activity on the territory of certain Member States.

The issue of the use of mass media and new information and communications technologies by terrorists and their supporters to commit, incite, recruit for, fund or plan terrorist acts should be appropriately addressed by the relevant authorities of Member States. States themselves should have a clear understanding of their direct commitment to and responsibility for undertaking all necessary measures to ensure that media, television and satellite channels broadcasting from their territories are not used for the aforementioned terrorist purposes through the spread of disinformation or of destructive extremist ideas and ideologies that raise tensions and fuel conflicts.

Regrettably, the issue of international terrorism has become very relevant to my country, Ukraine. Since 13 April, we have been conducting an ongoing counter-terrorism operation against heavily armed

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militants who are terrorizing the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. The operation's main purpose is to protect people and avoid casualties among the civilian population. Today, in the eastern regions of Ukraine, our law enforcement agencies are dealing with well-trained and heavily armed foreign mercenaries, terrorists and criminals who are taking hostages and killing and torturing people, threatening the territorial integrity and stability of Ukraine with weapons in their hands. There has been a significant increase in criminal activity in these regions. Criminals are taking advantage of the hostilities and are looting, stealing and committing assaults and robberies with a sense of impunity, creating fear among the local populations. The terrorists are seeking to gain political and territorial concessions, overthrow the constitutional system of Ukraine and violate its territorial integrity.

The Government of Ukraine has assigned a clear legal status to these armed groups and their activity on our territory, officially designating as terrorist organizations the so-called People's Republics of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. These organizations have rigid hierarchies and channels for supplying financing and arms for the purposes of planning violence, seizing hostages and carrying out subversive activity, assassinations and the intimidation of citizens. I would like to mention some examples of terrorist activity in Ukraine that clearly illustrate what is going on there at the moment and that should leave no doubt as to the terroristic nature of the activity of the armed groups operating in Ukraine.

First, we are currently experiencing transborder terrorism, a fairly new phenomenon in international terrorism. It should be pointed out that such terrorist activity is possible only when the neighbouring State on the other side of a border does nothing to prevent it. In May alone, groups of unidentified armed people in military uniforms, in trucks, made four large-scale attempts to break through the State border of Ukraine in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions from the territory of the Russian Federation, covering their efforts with heavy gunfire on Ukrainian border guards. All these attempts at entry occurred while Russian border guards did nothing — absolutely nothing — to prevent them from their side.

Concerning the issue of the training and recruitment of terrorists, at the end of last month Government forces eliminated a terrorist training camp located in the Luhansk region, a couple of hundred metres from the border with the Russian Federation. It was a major training centre, inducting and coordinating hundreds of militants for future terrorist activity in the region. A large military training base, where terrorists are trained and prepared to be sent to Ukraine, has also been discovered near the city of Rostov-on-Don in the Russian Federation. That information has been confirmed not only by Ukrainian intelligence data but also by the testimony of terrorists detained in Ukraine.

The use of mass media for disinformation, fueling the population's radicalization and dissatisfaction with the State authorities and creating fertile ground for the spread of terrorism, has become a real issue in Ukraine. Lies are openly broadcast through the Russian Federation's State television channels, misinforming Russian-speaking populations around the globe, making false accusations against Ukraine's Government and citizens and creating hysteria about our so-called national radicalization, which in the rest of the world is called patriotism.

Concerning hostage-taking, a number of ordinary Ukrainians who happen not to agree with the views of the terrorist groups in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions have now been taken hostage. Altogether, more than 230 individuals have been abducted in Ukraine, including, in three shocking cases, observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Ransoms have been demanded for some of these hostages, in striking testament to the real nature of these groups. Another outrageous abduction incident happened just yesterday in the town of Snizhne in the Donetsk region, when armed members of the terrorist organization known as the Donetsk People's Republic kidnapped 16 orphans who were travelling to a neighbouring area for their health. Later the same day, the authorities on the Russian side of the border allowed these children to enter their territory illegally, despite the fact that they had no permits, only copies of their birth certificates — a fact that qualifies the incident as one of the international abduction of children, according to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

Regarding the financing of terrorism, Ukraine's law enforcement agencies have frustrated a number of attempts to deliver considerable amounts of money in cash across the Ukrainian-Russian border; however, we can only make guesses as to how much may have managed to penetrate to the terrorist organizations in Ukraine. Cases of money transfers made by banks to

terrorists have also been identified. As an example, on 8 May Ukraine's financial intelligence agency prevented a financial transaction of $3 million to a company in the city of Donetsk.

Concerning mercenary and foreign fighters for terrorism, there is large-scale evidence of a massive presence of militants from abroad in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. Former soldiers from Russia's armed forces and law-enforcement bodies with previous experience of participation in armed conflicts are potential supporters of the terrorist movements in Ukraine, with their services generously paid for by so-called pro-Russian sympathizers in Ukraine. Hundreds of soldiers from the special Vostok Battalion, the special operations forces unit based in Chechnya, as well as members of the heavily armed Russian Cossack Wolf Centurion unit, do not conceal their identities but operate openly in the Donetsk cities of Slovyansk and Kramatorsk and in the city of Donetsk itself. In supporting these manifestations of terrorism in Ukraine, the Russian side is violating its commitments under an array of international treaties on preventing and combating international terrorism, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

During this meeting, we have heard many speakers use a phrase in their statements to the effect that nothing can justify terrorism. We ask the Assembly to please think about the meaning of that phrase. "Nothing" means nothing. It means no exceptions or excuses for committing this terrifying crime. There can be no justification for the deaths of civilian victims of terrorism and those fighting against it.

There should be no doubt as to the nature of these events, and any effort to call them by another name should be ignored. There is no civil war in Ukraine. The foundation of the conflict is the Russian Federation's occupation of Crimea and its impertinent interference in our internal affairs, accompanied by support for terrorist action against Ukrainian citizens and the State's territorial integrity. We respect those who call for a peaceful solution to the ongoing confrontation in eastern Ukraine. A full-scale national dialogue with all political actors, regional representatives and civil society is an absolute priority for the Government and President of Ukraine. But a dialogue with terrorists is impermissible and inconceivable. We do not want our people to live in fear and our country to be torn to pieces. Ukraine has every right and responsibility to protect its people's lives and its territorial integrity, and we will do so until every terrorist has been ejected from Ukraine.

We call on all Member States to join our efforts to counter and suppress terrorism in Ukraine in all its forms and manifestations. We call for the international community to unite in condemnation of the Russian Federation's continued violations of international law. There can be no double standards in counter-terrorism activity; either one fights terrorism or one supports it. We therefore urge the Russian Federation to not only declare its commitment to fighting international terrorism but to prove it in practice, stop sending terrorists and weapons into our country, withdraw its militants from Ukrainian territory and support the further restoration of peace and stability in Ukraine and the region. That would be a significant contribution by the Russian side to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Méndez Graterol (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express the gratitude of the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for the convening of this General Assembly meeting to consider the agenda item entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy", to which my country and the other States Members of the Organization attach particular importance.

We would like to extend our congratulations to the Permanent Representative of Turkey, Ambassador Halit Çevik, as well as his team, for his excellent work as facilitator of the intergovernmental consultations on the draft resolution on the fourth United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review (A/68/L.50), to be adopted by the Assembly. Furthermore, Venezuela aligns itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/68/PV.94).

Venezuela reaffirms its categorical rejection of international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of the perpetrator and where or on what grounds it takes place, in the belief that it constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, while also negatively affecting human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy. The dangers posed by terrorism require stronger international cooperation in order to prevent, combat and eliminate that transnational phenomenon.

Our country reiterates its full support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the central role of the General Assembly in addressing the issue. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a valuable political platform for the coordination and strengthening of international cooperation efforts in the fight against that scourge, in accordance with the norms of public international law, human rights and international humanitarian law, on the understanding that its comprehensive and balanced implementation is the primary responsibility of Member States.

Venezuela's commitment to the multilateral efforts to combat terrorism is demonstrated by our country's accession to various international and regional legal instruments and its subsequent fulfilment of the obligations incumbent on a State party to such international agreements, as well as through the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on the issue.

The international efforts promoted by the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies are essential to ensuring the effectiveness and success of measures to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism. However, we note with concern that, on many occasions, that task has been affected by the implementation of unilateral practices, such as preparing, with no justification, lists of countries that support terrorist activities, in contravention of international law, including the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. Venezuela condemns such unilateral actions. They undermine multilateral cooperation in that area, which is essential to the goals outlined in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy since 2006.

Moreover, while sharing our concerns about the risks posed to international peace and security by terrorist groups using information and communications technology to promote hatred, intolerance and violence, my country also reiterates its strong condemnation of the illegal use of such technological tools to violate the sovereignty and political independence of Member States, as well as the human rights of citizens. Venezuela has been a victim of such illegal acts, which undermine the international legal and political framework and peaceful coexistence among nations. It is unacceptable to resort to illegal methods to combat terrorism to the detriment of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the self-determination of peoples, human rights and international humanitarian law.

We support the calls to respect and protect the right to privacy, as established by article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including digital communications, in the conviction that the fight against terrorism must be carried out with strict adherence to international law.

Judicial cooperation is another important tool for combating terrorism. Our country underscores the importance of extradition treaties to facilitate the prosecution of individuals accused of having committed terrorist acts. In that regard, in accordance with the 1922 extradition treaty signed with the United States of America and pursuant to the annex to resolution 60/288, Venezuela reiterates the request for the extradition of the terrorist Luis Posada Carriles made to that Government. Posada Carriles is directly responsible for planning to blow up a Cubana de Aviación aircraft in October 1976. That terrorist attack killed 73 innocent citizens. Similarly, we reiterate to the same authorities the extradition request for the Venezuelan citizens Raúl Díaz Peña, José Antonio Colina and Germán Rodolfo Valera, accused of and charged with having comitted terrorist acts by placing and detonating explosive devices in foreign diplomatic missions in Venezuela in February 2003.

Finally, Venezuela reaffirms its full support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In that regard, it expresses its solidarity with the victims of terrorist attacks. We thereby underscore the role that the Organization has been playing, with the assistance of Member States, to ensure that such victims of the cruelty of terrorist barbarism, as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Spain, Gonzalo de Benito Secades, called it, are treated with dignity and respect.

Mr. Gharibi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to align myself with the statement delivered yesterday by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/68/PV.94). I take this opportunity to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to commend the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Turkey and his colleagues for their hard work in facilitating the text of the draft resolution on the fourth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/68/L.50). My delegation takes note of the Secretary-General's report A/68/841, which contains an update

on the measures taken to implement the Strategy within the past two years. Furthermore, it contains a matrix of projects under implementation, together with submissions by Member States and regional and subregional organizations that solely and exclusively represent the views of those contributing parties, not the United Nations.

The growing violent extremism and sectarian violence that plague many parts of the world today are of great concern to the international community. To address that concern, His Excellency Mr. Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has stressed the need to promote prudent moderation and to reject extremism. He further developed that theme in his address to the General Assembly in September last year, in which he dedicated a significant part of his statement to the imperative of fighting violence and extremism (see A/68/PV.6). He spoke of fears and hopes, including the fear of the institutionalization of violence and extremism and the hope of the preference for dialogue over conflict and for moderation over extremism. President Rouhani warned of the catastrophic impact of violent and extremist narratives and proposed to the United Nations that it consider the idea of a world against violence and extremism, which was adopted by consensus by this body on 18 December 2013 (resolution 68/127).

Draft resolution A/68/L.50 expresses alarm about the rise in violent extremism and condemns all those behind the scourge and acts such as targeting the civilian population, attacking religious and cultural sites and disrupting the development process in societies. If we look at the current situation and the escalation of violent extremism and terrorism in Syria and Iraq, which we condemn in the strongest terms, we see how pertinent that resolution and the core idea it proposes are. It strives to promote a comprehensive collective plan to counter extremism and terrorism, and to advance respectful mutual dialogue with a view to making a secure and peaceful world for all, free from violence and extremism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been the target of terrorist acts in different forms and manifestations, including State-sponsored terrorism, during the past two years and for the entire post-revolution era. To cite recent examples, I refer the Assembly to the terrorist attacks in Iran's south-eastern border area, including the killing and abduction of a number of border guards. Terrorists have also targeted several Iranian diplomats and diplomatic premises in Beirut, Sanaa and Peshawar, resulting in the loss of life and the injury of diplomats, the staff of the missions and peaceful civilians nearby. Terrorism knows no border and violent extremists, fuelled by intolerance and hatred, nurtured by an environment conducive to the spread of terrorism, as well as receiving of support by their foreign sponsors, pose a high risk to the peaceful life of nations and victimize innocent civilians.

Iran fully understands the untold consequences of acts of terrorism for the victims and for society at large. We hold in high regard the large number of Iranian victims of terrorism, which amounts to almost 17,000, affected by numerous terrorist attacks over the last 35 years, and the Government has taken all possible measures to address their needs and concerns properly. Those victims are the best evidence of the failed policies of terrorist groups and those who support them for the sake of pressuring our nation.

Iran opposes any attempt to equate the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation for self-determination and national liberation with terrorism. Such an equation is aimed at prolonging the occupation of territories and the oppression of their people. The use of State power for suppression and violence against peoples struggling in opposition to foreign occupation and in exercising their inalienable right to self-determination should continue to be condemned.

We strongly reject the unilateral preparation of lists accusing other States of so-called sponsoring terrorism and any consequences thereof, which is inconsistent with international law and is merely exploited as a political tool to advance other agendas and the political goals of enlisting Governments. Such unilateral acts encourage reciprocity by the targeted States and only undermine urgently required joint efforts on the part of all States to counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We invite such Governments to reconsider their unilateral policies that in no way contribute to global fight against terrorism.

The same concern also applies to the misuse of multinational financial action entities, created initially by a small group of countries, that unfoundedly label Member States in terms of financing terrorism and money-laundering. While we commend efforts aimed at capacity-building for better cooperation in cutting any support to terrorist groups, we seriously warn against any attempts to categorize States in that regard. The

issue of the financing of terrorism should be addressed in an impartial, objective, technical and non-political manner. No entity is authorized or entitled to create rankings among States, which is unconstructive and only impedes mutual cooperation. We also request the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to take into account that important criterion in collaborating with such entities wishing to work with the United Nations system.

For decades, a number of root causes and factors have led or contributed to the spread of terrorism. The unlawful use of force against other States, foreign aggression and occupation, as well as foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States, are among such causes and factors to name a few. Moreover, the excessive and/or disproportionate use of military force in the name of countering terrorism creates fertile ground for vicious cycles of violence and terrorism. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy requires that those conditions be well addressed. The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly believes that the Strategy should be implemented in a balanced way under the auspices of the General Assembly. It is in that regard that we highly encourage CTITF to better interact with all Member States on a regular basis in order to gain more support in the overall implementation of the Strategy, and to strengthen the sense of ownership for all members.

Since the adoption of resolution 66/282 during the third review of the Strategy, a notorious terrorist organization responsible for countless terrorist attacks targeting Iranian civilians was delisted from the terrorist blacklist of some States. Although the listing of the well-known terrorist organization itself did not oblige the relevant authorities to end impunity for its leaders, perpetrators of terrorist acts against Iranian people, delisting them came as shocking news particularly to the thousands of victims and their families. It unfortunately proved how terrorism can be subject to politics for some parties.

We must recognize that selective or double standards and simply categorizing good and bad terrorism based on short-term political interests will not help us uproot terrorism. Such wrong approaches only undermine international trust and cooperation in countering terrorism. The international community should have a unified approach in fighting this scourge in an indiscriminate manner.

As we successfully accomplish the fourth biennial review of the Strategy in the current series of meetings, we must carefully follow national, regional and global plans to implement the Strategy in a comprehensive way, with the cooperation of all, in a balanced manner, with sufficient attention to the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism while avoiding double standards and discrimination for better and lasting results.

Mr. Ishikawa (Japan): On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express appreciation for the President's leadership in preparation for the fourth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I also extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Yaşar Halit Çevik, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Turkey, for his great contribution and efforts in facilitating the consultations on the draft resolution (A/68/L.50) for this review. Japan welcomes the Secretary-General's comprehensive report (A/68/841) on the activities undertaken by the United Nations in implementing the Strategy.

I firmly condemn the recent terrorist attacks and the abduction of the Turkish diplomats in Iraq, and also condemn the abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls by Boko Haram in Nigeria. Japan has renewed its determination to fight against terrorism. Any violence committed by terrorists cannot be justified on any grounds or for any purpose.

In January 2013, the precious lives of 40 people, including 10 Japanese citizens, were lost in a terrorist attack in Algeria. Although the concerted efforts of Member States and the international community to fight terrorism have yielded certain results, those attacks show that the threat of terrorism is still profound. With the strong political will to eradicate terrorism, the Government of Japan has carried out several activities, such as regional assistance to enact a national security strategy in order to tackle international terrorism.

As for regional assistance, Japan hosted the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) in June 2013, with the participation of 51 countries from Africa, including 39 Heads of State and Government, in attendance. At TICAD V, discussions focused on peace and stability in the Sahel region, so as to improve the anti-terrorism and security capacity of judicial and law enforcement units. In that regard, Prime Minister Abe announced that Japan would provide approximately $1 billion in development and humanitarian assistance over the next

five years. In addition, he also announced that Japan will provide human resources development funds for the 2,000 people responsible for anti-terrorism measures and security in North Africa and the Sahel region. $16 million has been already provided for counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance in the region, in collaboration with competent international organizations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Development Programme.

Having close ties with South-East Asian countries, Japan attaches great importance to cooperation in the region. Japan has held the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Japan Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism every year since 2006, and has been extending assistance to countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in counter-terrorism capacity-building programmes. Last December, the Japanese Prime Minister announced that Japan would provide $100 million to further strengthen its cooperation to support the ASEAN community building, including in the field of counter-terrorism cooperation. We expect and support the establishment of a resilient community against terrorism in the region.

At the end of last year, the Japanese Government adopted a national security strategy which sets up the basic orientation of diplomatic and defence policies related to national security. That strategy identifies international terrorism as one of the main security threats and also refers to the growing nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime, such as drug and arms trafficking and money-laundering. It is becoming increasingly important to address the various forms of organized crime, which serve as financial sources of terrorism.

In order to tackle the aforementioned issues, we must emphasize the importance of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Since the adoption of the Strategy in 2006, efforts made by Member States for its implementation have steadily progressed. The Strategy continues to be an important, holistic and comprehensive instrument for representing the full engagement in counter-terrorism by the international community. We should therefore take this opportunity to examine the progress made by all Member States in implementing the Strategy in preventing and fighting against terrorism and to reaffirm our commitment to enhancing our counter-terrorism cooperation under the Strategy.

In implementing the Strategy, effective coordination among United Nations entities and Member States is indispensable and appreciated because international counter-terrorism efforts have to be concerted and integrated to maximize their outcome. We also appreciate the various measures taken by regional organizations, such as ASEAN, and multilateral counterterrorism frameworks, such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). Japan has been actively involved in the work of the GCTF and we are confident that the good-practice documents adopted by the GCTF are highly valuable and useful to all Member States.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm Japan's resolve to implement the Strategy and its strong commitment to continuing its efforts and cooperation on national, regional and international levels to eradicate terrorism. Hoping to see more effective coordination within the United Nations and with its relevant entities in implementing the Strategy, Japan is ready to continue its active contributions towards our collective endeavour.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): At the outset, I wish to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Çevik, Permanent Representative of Turkey, and his team for their tireless efforts and constructive work in conducting the review process.

My delegation also associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/68/PV.94).

Terrorism is blind and strikes indiscriminately in any part of the world — from Iraq to Colombia, from Belgium to Pakistan and from Nigeria to Norway. My delegation would like to reiterate its firm condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and would further like to express its deepest sympathy to the families affected by those heinous acts.

In that context, Lebanon believes that the fourth review is timely indeed. It highlights the necessity of addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, the lessons learned, the emerging challenges and threats, and the importance of more effectively supporting the victims of terrorism. We therefore strongly commend the launch of the United Nations Victims of Terrorism Support Portal. The Strategy reaffirms the central role of the General Assembly in combating terrorism and stresses once again the importance of promoting an integrated, comprehensive

and balanced approach of its four complementary pillars.

Prevention remains an efficient policy in combating terrorism. It should be based on the crucial role of education. Such education should promote dialogue and tolerance among religions and civilizations. We therefore welcome the reference to the promotion of dialogue and tolerance among religions and civilizations in the draft resolution (A/68/L.50). While it is deplorable that a reference to the root causes was deleted from the final draft of the review, it remains important to address the root causes that may lead to extremism and radicalism, such as flash points of tension, social exclusion and marginalization and impunity and double standards in compliance with international law.

We stress the inclusion in the review of the information and communication technology, which has been playing a growing role, as it is reflected in the Secretary-General's report (A/68/841). One has to be aware that those instruments can assist us and be a driving force in tackling terrorism, but they shall not become a pretext to justify and violate fundamental rights contained in relevant international norms. In that regard, we commend the reference to the respect of the right to privacy in the context of counter-terrorism, and underscore the fact that combating terrorism while respecting human rights are not two conflicting principles, but rather convergent ones. Furthermore, we recall the absolute necessity of differentiating between terrorism and the legitimate right to resist foreign occupation, as it is solidly embedded in international law. However, some of the individuals who resist are the victims of terrorists who exploit their just cause and use it as a catalyst for committing condemnable acts.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his relevant report on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and welcome the observations and recommendations he set out. We also laud the efforts and work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate for their significant cooperation and expertise in assisting States in countering terrorism and supporting that Strategy. In that respect, the three-pronged approach implemented by the Task Force is a positive step which will promote better cooperation and consistency.

My country, which is party to 13 relevant United Nations international instruments against terrorism, has suffered the devastating consequences of terrorism, which has claimed numerous innocent lives, including those of civilians, political leaders and journalists. The Lebanese Armed Forces have made tremendous progress in bringing those attacks to an end. Indeed, the Army has arrested the perpetrators of terrorist attacks that have taken place in Lebanon since October 2013 and have resulted in more than 65 fatalities and over 400 casualties. Our Army has also been able to prevent further attacks by defusing a significant number of car bombs across the country. In that context, the newly sworn-in Government pledged in its policy statement to confront terrorism relentlessly.

Finally, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the alarming acts of terrorism taking place in the occupied Palestinian territory. In addition to the well-known crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by the State of Israel, Israeli settlers continue to perpetrate acts of terrorism against the Palestinian civilian population and their property. Such acts should be condemned in the strongest possible terms and their authors prosecuted. Clearly, Israel's alleged commitment to democracy and the rule of law does not extend to certain categories of populations.

The Strategy should now more than ever be reflected in a comprehensive convention with a unified definition of terrorism, which will enable us to counter the scourge of terrorism around the world in accordance with international law.

Mr. Wachtel (United States of America): I would like to thank the President for organizing this important meeting, which comes on the heels of the horrific terrorist attacks in Karachi and the kidnapping of Turkish diplomats in Iraq. We join others in condemning these acts, which remind us of the salience of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and of the importance of rededicating ourselves to its implementation.

This body's adoption of the document almost eight years ago marked the first time that all United Nations Member States agreed on a common, comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy, a landmark achievement. The Strategy remains as relevant today as when it was first agreed on, and we recognize the importance of ensuring that our efforts to implement it are not static. Indeed, as the global terrorist threat continues

to evolve, so must our response. Although Al-Qaida's core is degraded, associates in the Al-Qaida network are becoming more operationally autonomous and increasingly focused on local and regional objectives. There are now more aggressive Al-Qaida affiliates and like-minded groups, most notably in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, North and West Africa and Somalia, among others.

To finance their operations, terrorist groups have turned to a range of criminal activity. Kidnapping for ransom remains the most frequent and profitable source of illicit financing, an appalling practice that the Security Council rightly condemned earlier this year in resolution 2133 (2014), and which the General Assembly condemns in its current draft resolution (A/68/L.50).

Another worrying trend is the rise of foreign terrorist fighters travelling to Syria. The conflict is attracting thousands of fighters from around the world, particularly from North Africa, the Gulf, Central Asia and Europe. These fighters are travelling to participate in the fight, with some joining violent extremist groups. A number of countries have expressed concerns that some of their citizens who have gone to Syria may engage in violent extremist activities when they return home.

The United States also encourages States to exercise greater vigilance in order to prevent terrorists from using improvised explosive devices (IEDs), a weapon that has killed more civilians than combatants. In 2013, more than 43,700 men, women and children were maimed or killed in approximately 16,300 IED incidents outside Afghanistan. This problem is global and has become too devastating for us to ignore. To tackle it, States should share information, establish partnerships and develop strategies to combat IEDs and the networks and means used to produce them.

Terrorism is a dynamic, adaptable phenomenon that is highly dependent on local, political, social and economic circumstances. We know that terrorist movements thrive on State failure, on political upheaval and on deprivation, among other factors. The United States supports the Strategy's call for stronger efforts to prevent conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Security and development are inextricably linked, and we must innovate along that nexus to better counter and prevent violent extremism. This includes collaborating on concrete development-based projects that mitigate the drivers of violent extremism.

Leveraging partnerships is also vital to the success of our collective counter-terrorism efforts. The collaboration of the United Nations with the Global Counterterrorism Forum exemplifies an important and effective partnership, the benefits of which continue to extend well beyond the Forum's 30 members. As a result of the rule of law-based good-practices documents that the Forum has developed with input from a variety of United Nations experts, countries from around the world have an increasingly set of practical tools to rely on as they confront the terrorist threats within their borders and in their regions. We encourage States to use the Forum's framework documents in areas such as countering violent extremism, criminal justice, kidnapping for ransom, supporting victims of terrorism, and community-oriented policing.

In addition, we look forward to the formulation of the first-ever set of global good practices for addressing the challenges posed by foreign fighters. We also eagerly anticipate the opening in Malta next week of the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, which will help strengthen criminal justice systems and advance the implementation of pillar IV of the United Nations Strategy.

As we help build this rule of law capacity and devote more attention to human rights, we are also working to reduce the number of recruits to terrorist groups and to counter the messaging that these groups use to appeal to a wider audience. Our efforts to counter violent extremism are most effective when conducted through international partnerships, as, for example, through the Hedayah Centre, based in and supported by the United Arab Emirates and other countries, which will focus on projects aimed at countering extremism through innovative means. And we welcome the forthcoming establishment later this year in Geneva of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, the first-ever global effort to harness the resources of the public and private sectors to support local, community-based projects on educational and vocational training, civic engagement, media and women's advocacy. We encourage States to support and contribute to this important multilateral financing mechanism.

The need for a holistic United Nations approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism has never been greater. Only with a targeted, nimble and united approach can we stay ahead of and respond appropriately to the ever-changing terrorist landscape. We welcome the important role of the United Nations Counter-

Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) in building the counter-terrorism capacity of Member States, complementing the good work that the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime continues to undertake with criminal justice officials around the world. The United States looks forward to making a financial contribution to the UNCCT later this year. We also encourage the Office of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force to continue coordinating among the range of United Nations entities working on all of these issues, including by more actively engaging development actors, most notably the United Nations Development Programme.

The support of the United States for the Strategy and the collaborative and long-term strategic approach it embodies is unwavering. It is clear that many Member States, and the United Nations system as a whole, have come a long way in our efforts to prevent and counter the scourge of terrorism. It is also clear, however, that our mission is not nearly complete.

Mr. Ahmed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Sudan would like to express its sympathies to Pakistan and Turkey over the kidnapping of Turkish diplomats in Mosul, in Iraq, and the attacks on Karachi International Airport. We strongly condemn these terrorist acts, as we condemn every terrorist attack that has taken place recently.

My delegation commends the convening of the fourth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We associate ourselves with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/68/PV.94). The Sudan also commends the efforts of the Permanent Representative of Turkey and his team to facilitate the consensus on draft resolution A/68/L.50, entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review", in a transparent and effective way. My delegation would like to commend the report of the Secretary-General (A/68/841), in which he outlines the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and points out the various challenges facing us in that regard.

My delegation condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. We reiterate our full commitment to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a comprehansive, sustained and consistent way. We also undersore the importance of strengthening regional and international cooperation on efforts in that regard through a balanced approach towards the four pillars of the Strategy.

The Sudan has ratified all international counter-terrorism agreements, as well as the African and Arab regional conventions in that regard. The Sudan actively supports the efforts of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to combat terrorism. We believe the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to be one of the most important international legal frameworks guiding international legislation and institutions. All our national laws are in accordance with those international legal frameworks.

In the context of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy the Sudan has made significant efforts to combat terrorism at the national level. In that regard, we note some of the most important initiatives of the national body to combat terrorism in the Sudan.

As part of our efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the national body for combating terrorism has adopted a national strategy that is the outcome of in-depth consultations with various sectors of society, including civil society groups, religious leaders and academics. The development of the national stratgey is now in its final stages and is being considered by Parliament. In the context of legal reforms, we have amended the anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism funding laws, which were adopted in 2010. The various new kinds of terror activity were included in the law. In February, we also adopted a new law on combating human trafficking.

As part of its regional efforts, the Sudan has hosted several conferences and workshops under the framework of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the International Fund for Agricultural Development in order to strengthen regional cooperation on fighting terrorism and on exchanging experiences and expertise.

In order to raise awareness about the threats of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to mobilize capacity within society, the national body organized awareness-raising programmes in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, with a focus on young people, students, women, social and religious leaders and trade unions. We have also issued several publications and pamphlets that outline the initiatives launched by the national authorities on legislation that provides for the use of mass media to

combat terrorrism, as well as programmes to combat cybercrime. The national authorities have also granted scholarships at the Masters and postgraduate levels in the counter-terrorism field in cooperation with universities and research and study centres.

Fighting poverty and marginalization and strengthening dialogue between the north and the south and at the international level is important so as to achieve a balance in international institutions. Such steps constitute the first step towards dealing with terrorism in all its forms and manfestations and to finding comprehensive approaches.

The Sudan condemns the unilateral measures of some countries that accuse others of hosting terrorism. Those countries act on the basis of a hidden political agenda. Such unilateral measures give rise to growing tension in international relations and politicize our common efforts.

Currently, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations regardless of the perpetrator or link with any religion, civilization or ethnic group. The Sudan would therefore like to reiterate that international and regional cooperation is the best way to strengthen our efforts to combat terroism, while respecting international law and human rights.

My delegation would like to reiterate that the primary responsibility for implementing the Strategy lies with Member States. We therefore encourage the various Member States to join efforts to implement the Strategy and to work hand in hand with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF). We greatly appreciate the efforts of the CTITF with regard to the capacity-building of countries and call for further work in that regard.

In conclusion, the Sudan would like to reiterate its firm commitment to fighting terroism in all its forms and manifestations and to continuing our efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Holovka (Serbia): At the outset, I would like to join other speakers in thanking the Permanent Representative of Turkey for his efforts in facilitating the consultations on the draft resolution (A/68/L.50) that we will adopt at the conclusion of this debate. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (A/68/841) and, in particular, for the innovative approach in providing a matrix, thereby facilitating an appraisal of the numerous and complex activities undertaken by the entities of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF).

We most strongly condemn the abduction of Turkish diplomats and their families in Iraq, as well as other recent terrorist attacks. Serbia fully aligns itself with the statement made yesterday by the observer of the European Union (see A/68/PV.94) and wishes to make the following comments from its national perspective.

The fourth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy marks a significant milestone in the implementation of our common and concerted efforts in confronting violent extremism, whose worst manifestation is terrorism, a scourge that has continued to plague us in new and ever more challenging forms. Having grown to 34 entities, the CTITF is at the forefront of those efforts, which require a balance of all four pillars of the Strategy, as rightly pointed out in the Secretary-General's report.

Serbia has always strongly condemned terrorism unequivocally in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes. Serbia is party to 14 of the 18 international counter-terrorism instruments and is doing its utmost to fully implement all relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1373 (2001). It stands ready to contribute to all efforts, as it has done so far, through multilateral and regional cooperation, as well as through the 60 bilateral agreements with individual States on law enforcement cooperation.

The Government of Serbia believes that the main threat to regional security derives from violent extremism and other transnational organized crime. However, it is aware of the global terrorism threat and the challenges involved in countering terrorism effectively, recognizing the need to employ a multidisciplinary approach. To that end, it is in the process of finalizing a comprehensive and integrated national counter-terrorism strategy that will be supported by an implementation action plan.

Serbia places strong emphasis on regional cooperation, in which it actively participates in sharing information on movements of criminal and terrorist suspects. With regard to the exchange of police information among the Balkan countries and beyond, the National Central Bureau of INTERPOL in Belgrade is an active participant in different INTERPOL

anti-crime activities in the region, particularly as regards projects focusing on terrorism and terrorism-related issues. It is also increasing its cooperation with a variety of organizations and networks, such as Europol and the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre. It has been a co-organizer and participant in a number of regional workshops, sharing its experiences and best practices. It stands ready to share those good practices and expertise with countries facing similar challenges. With its European Union accession negotiating process under way, Serbia expects that its counter-terrorism capabilities will be further enhanced.

On the national level, Serbia has amended its criminal code and code of criminal procedure with a view to bringing counter-terrorism measures into line with the international counter-terrorism instruments and international human rights law. In trying suspected terrorists, it accords them all rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the aforementioned legislative acts, providing them with all basic due process guarantees. In implementing its international obligations and in an attempt to streamline its legislation, it has introduced the offences of incitement to terrorism and recruitment and training for terrorist acts and is particularly concerned of late with the phenomenon of foreign fighters.

Those efforts were noted in the report of the Counter-Terrorism Committee that was issued earlier this year following a visit conducted in the spring of 2013. The visit was very successful and provided important input for reflections on proceeding forward, particularly as regards further increasing national capacity. We are looking forward to discussing a follow-up visit shortly.

Let me reiterate once again Serbia's full support to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to all the relevant documents of the United Nations. When it comes to fighting terrorism, the guidelines contained in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy are of paramount importance and utmost urgency.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank you, Sir, for the welcome initiative to convene this meeting, which gives us the opportunity to review for the fourth time the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and discuss the progress made in its implementation since its adoption by consensus by the General Assembly on 8 September 2006. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the high-quality report that he has provided us with (A/68/841) and welcome the relevant recommendations contained therein aimed at, inter alia, fighting the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism.

Recent events have been marked by the trauma of persistent terrorist attacks in recent days, including at the airport in Karachi in Pakistan; in Mosul, Tikrit and other Iraqi cities; in Aguelhok, in my country, Mali; and the kidnapping of 200 schoolgirls in Nigeria. Those despicable and unjustifiable acts amply illustrate that the hydra of terrorism is far from defeated. It is today one of the leading threats to peace, security and stability throughout the world. I would like to express, on behalf of the people and Government of Mali, our sincere condolences and sympathy to the brotherly peoples of Pakistan, Iraq, Turkey and Chad, following the tragic events that they have just experienced. Our thoughts are also with all victims of terrorism worldwide.

My country, Mali, which has paid and unfortunately continues to pay a heavy toll due to the terrorist attacks following occupation of the northern regions of our territory by armed terrorist and jihadist groups, condemns in the strongest terms all forms of violent extremism. Religious extremism, particularly the phenomenon of terrorism, is completely alien to Malian society, which is known for its openness, tolerance and practice of a pacifist and moderate Islam. We have the firm conviction that nothing — absolutely nothing — can justify terrorism. No cause can justify that scourge, which is tied to no particular religion, race or colour.

In my country, Mali, the authorities have risen to the challenge of preventing violent extremism and fighting terrorism. They have developed a clear strategy and put in place measures that combine activities related to development and the fight against poverty in addition to an arsenal of suppressive measures. National laws were passed on 23 July 2008 and 30 December 2010 on the suppression of terrorism and transnational crime and on relating to the fight against terrorist financing, respectively. Mali has also signed and ratified most of the universal legal instruments against terrorism and transnational organized crime. Other initiatives also exist at the regional level involving Mali's neighbouring countries and partners.

I recall that Mali is currently chairing the ministerial coordination platform on the Sahel strategies. The aim is to unite the various strategies and initiatives to address the multiple and complex challenges that all of the States of the Sahel face. Those initiatives, as the

Assembly knows, are based on, inter alia, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and rely on four main pillars: the elimination of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, the prevention of and fight against terrorism, capacity-building for all States, and the role of the United Nations.

The terrorist attack in Aguelhok in northern Mali on 11 June, on the eve of the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), must lead the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities by listing, in the new resolution on MINUSMA, the necessary measures to definitively address the issue of terrorism in northern Mali. The Council should also require the armed groups who are signatories of the Ouagadougou agreement of 18 June 2013 to distance themselves from terrorism, lay down their arms and return to the cantonment process and the path of dialogue to which my Government is inviting them.

In the search for a comprehensive approach to the fight against terrorism, we must emphasize the virtues of dialogue and mutual understanding. We must fight against the appeal of intolerance and extremism. It is in that context that the President of the Republic of Mali, His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who was the guest of honour at the United States-Islamic World forum held from 9 to 11 June in Doha, has issued a resounding call on the international community to present a common front in the fight against terrorism and religious intolerance. He has emphasized that the hydra of terrorism has not yet given up the ghost and called on the international community to pursue its efforts in Mali and at the regional level.

From this rostrum, I would like to express the gratitude of the Government of Mali to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco for training 500 Malian imams in his country. His Majesty's commendable initiative, which has expanded to other countries, will carry and spread the values of Islam — values of peace, tolerance and acceptance of differences. Today more than ever, we must replace incitements to hatred with speech that promotes peace.

In conclusion, I would like to recall that it is essential that we promote international cooperation in the fight against terrorism by putting greater emphasis on its prevention and suppression. In dealing with the many challenges that have worsened the phenomenon of terrorism, particularly in the Sahel-Saharan region, we should adopt a collective approach and strengthen cooperation between the United Nations system and all stakeholders at the national and regional levels. The delegation of Mali supports the Secretary-General's recommendations for making the struggle against terrorism more effective and welcomes the report and the draft resolution submitted for our consideration.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): I would like to thank the President for convening this meeting, and Ambassador Halit Çevik for facilitating the informal consultations on the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Kazakhstan adds its voice to those of previous speakers in condemning the recent acts of terrorism.

The fight against international terrorism demands a long-term, comprehensive approach and regional and global cooperation, with the active participation of all United Nations Member States. Kazakhstan is a party to all the major international conventions relating to the fight against terrorism. We welcome the idea of convening an ad hoc committee once a year for drafting a comprehensive anti-terrorism convention, and we support the further improvement of other anti-terrorist treaty mechanisms. My country is also committed to supporting the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism.

We must never lose sight of the human dimension of terrorism. My country is therefore convinced that implementing the Strategy's main provisions through national legislation is also crucial to promoting the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development, and we therefore also support measures aimed at providing comprehensive assistance to the victims of terrorist acts.

We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and are ready to cooperate with it and in the establishment of the post of a coordinator for countering terrorism, as well as in strengthening the work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. At the same time, however, we do not believe that approaches to terrorism should be merged with those for organized crime. While the two are interconnected, it is important that we focus on eliminating drug trafficking that helps to finance terrorism. The Republic of Kazakhstan has always stood for strengthening Member States' national capabilities for addressing drug trafficking through

regional and international cooperation, especially with regard to money laundering and the financing of terrorist organizations.

Kazakhstan is guided by the Strategy and the other universal international instruments that it has ratified, and is also actively engaged in the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

As a country that voluntarily renounced possession of one-fourth of the world's nuclear arsenal, Kazakhstan attaches great importance to implementing measures to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction into the hands of terrorists. We therefore organized a conference in Astana in 2011 on global initiatives to combat acts of nuclear terrorism, and in 2010 the first meeting of the Implementation and Assessment Group of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Kazakhstan, as an active member of the Anti-Terrorist Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, has signed the SCO Convention against Terrorism and all agreements on combating the illicit trafficking of arms, ammunition and explosives. We work closely with the Central Asian Regional Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

We fully support the joint action plan to implement the Strategy in Central Asia that has been formulated by several partners — the countries of the region, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the European Union and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in Ashgabat. In June 2012, Kazakhstan also organized a consultative meeting with regional organizations in Almaty on implementing the Strategy in Central Asia. As the Chair of the OSCE for 2010, Kazakhstan hosted the Conference on the Prevention of Terrorism that adopted the Astana Declaration, affirming the commitment of OSCE member States and partner countries to combating terrorism. Counter-terrorist activities are also very high on the agenda of the collaboration between Kazakhstan and the European Union. In addition, my country is a participant in a NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan, thereby expanding its collaboration with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

The Republic of Kazakhstan supports the text of the draft resolution under consideration today (A/68/L.50) and urges that it be adopted by consensus. We are deeply committed to working with other Member States to more effectively combat the ever-increasing scourge of terrorism.

Mr. Alshamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to commend the convening of this important meeting and to thank the President and Ambassador Halit Çevik, Permanent Representative of Turkey, and his team for facilitating the consultations on the final text of the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We also subscribe to the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/68/PV.94).

Terrorism unquestionably constitutes the greatest threat to international peace and security today. It is not confined to any place or time, and our counter-terrorism strategy must therefore be adaptable and proactive. That requires a biennial review of the Strategy in order to be able to evaluate our achievements in its implementation, develop and update its provisions and working methods with the goal of overcoming all the challenges that constrain the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

My country, the United Arab Emirates, has continued to develop its national policy, legislative systems and operational procedures aimed at countering acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as related phenomena such as money-laundering, illicit trafficking in arms and drugs, and other prohibited acts and cross-border crimes. To that end, my country has harnessed all its capabilities and available national expertise in order to coordinate and cooperate with the relevant international, regional and subregional mechanisms working to combat terrorism, with the aim of preventing any attempt to use its territory, air space or territorial waters as staging areas from which to commit terrorist and criminal acts in violation of international law.

It was against that backdrop that in 2004 the State enacted a federal law on combating terrorist crimes, taking into account all obligations contained in international and regional instruments related to counter-terrorism, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions. The State has also taken many strict measures to track down perpetrators of terrorist crimes

and established a national counter-terrorism committee to follow-up on the implementation of relevant Council resolutions, adoption of draft national reports to be submitted to the relevant Security Council Committees, as well as to consider the State's accession to relevant international and regional conventions and treaties. In that regard, I note that my country has acceded to 13 international conventions.

In this connection, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that, on 18 June, my country will inaugurate the Gulf Cooperation Council regional secretariat of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Center of Excellence, in cooperation with the European Union and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

The United Arab Emirates is proud of the progress and cultural renaissance it has achieved since its inception 42 years ago, including building a multicultural and tolerant society, as well as religious freedom for all diverse communities and the achievement of gender parity. The United Arab Emirates is ranked first among the Arab countries and fourteenth internationally on the index of gender equality, which represents a formidable barrier against all forms of terrorism and extremism.

The United Arab Emirates encourages the promotion of all political efforts aimed at resolving differences and conflicts, as well as the dissemination of a culture of tolerance and peace; enhanced convergence between civilizations and religions; the consolidation of the principles of justice and international law; and deepened respect for human rights, all of which represent important elements in addressing the main root causes for the phenomenon of terrorism.

In addition, out of our concern to disseminate and promote the principles of Islam, which are anchored in moderation and tolerance, my country has implemented an imam-training project in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, in cooperation with the Afghan Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs; the United Arab Emirates General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments, and the Zayed House for Islamic Culture with the aim of training 20,000 imams in Afghan villages and rural areas. The first class of 350 trainees graduated in September 2013.

In March, the United Arab Emirates hosted a global forum on the promotion of peace in Islamic societies, with the participation of 250 Islamic scholars and intellectuals from all over the world. It was the first such meeting for Muslim scholars and intellectuals at the global level to form a united front to confront extremist ideologies that contravene human values and the tolerant principles of Islam and to counter the evils of sectarianism and violence that plague the Islamic world for decades.

Convinced of the need to consolidate the notions of tolerance and the renunciation of violence, my Government has also promoted efforts to disseminate moderation and renounce violence and combate extremism in all their forms. It also took the initiative, in 2012, to establish the International Centre of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism in Abu Dhabi, known as Hedayah Center, as one of the initiatives of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum. In this context, I note the senior officials meeting on the role of education in fighting extremism, organized by the Hedayah Center, with the support of the United Arab Emirates, in New York on 25 September 2013, on the sidelines of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Despite all the tireless efforts of the international community to fight terrorism in all its forms, the international community continues to see an increasing incidence acts of terrorism and organized crime. Religion has been exploited as a means for exclusion and marginalization within the coomunity, which has contributed to fueling acts of terrorism, aggravated tension and instability in general. Therefore, we support the proposal to convene an international conference on terrorism that would contribute to the definition of terrorism and distinguish it from peoples' endeavour to achieve self-determination. In that context, we also stress the need for due compliance with all principles of international humanitarian law in implementing counter-terrorism measures.

In conclusion, it is our hope that our current review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will contribute to improving its objectives and implementation mechanisms with a view to the total eradication of all acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and to creating a world that enjoys the principles of justice, equality, liberty and peaceful coexistence among all nations and civilizations in peace, security and prosperity.

Mr. Elias-Fatile (Nigeria): At the outset, let me thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting, as well as the

facilitator of the fourth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Ambassador Çevik. I also wish to join previous speakers in expressing appreciation for their inspirational leadership and invaluable contributions to global efforts to combat the menace of terrorism.

In our world today, terrorism has become a regular occurrence. No issue has dominated the strategic landscape as much as terrorism. It constitutes one of the most serious and deadliest threats to international peace and security. It is insidious in character and transnational in nature. Recent terrorist attacks and onslaughts across the world, particularly in Africa, serve to remind us that this threat is a clear and present danger. It constitutes a threat to the great and small, to the strong and weak alike. The international community understands that terrorism is organized in a tightly woven network. We believe that it takes a network to defeat a network. With that understanding comes the realization of the importance of an all-inclusive regional and international collaborative approach to deterring and defeating terrorists. The key to its defeat is best described by the naval metaphor of summoning all hands on deck.

In Nigeria, over the past months we have faced an upsurge in terrorist challenges in several parts of the country by a notorious terrorist group, which has come to be identified as Boko Haram. The group indiscriminately targets civilians, Muslims and Christians alike, all places of worship, recreational centres and media establishments. Not even a United Nations bureau was spared in 2011. Those acts, rather than daunt Nigeria, helped us to strengthen our resolve to rise up against the scourge of terrorism through the development of new national plans, closer cooperation with our neighbours and the international community.

In that regard, in March 2014, the Office of the National Security Adviser in Nigeria delineated a four-part plan of action to address the terrorist cycle, from radicalization to rehabilitation. The plan, designed as a soft approach to countering terrorism, is premised on Nigeria's national experiences, as well as aspects of the Secretary-General's report (S/2014/9) on the work of the United Nations to help States and subregional and regional entities in Africa in fighting terrorism. It involves all tiers of Government and consists of four streams.

The first stream is the deradicalization of convicted terrorists, suspects awaiting trial and those who might be released through court orders or such Government decisions arising from the ongoing engagement and dialogue with repentant suspects. The second stream is targeted at the whole society, which is expected to galvanize the Nigerian society against terrorism through the family, cultural, religious and national value systems. The third stream is aimed at building capacity to communicate national values coherently and institutionalize such capacity through the military and law enforcement. The fourth stream, which took cognizance of the economic root causes of terrorism, involves the economic revitalization of six states in the north-east of Nigeria.

To firm up that national initiative and create a regional basis for it to succeed, Nigeria reached an understanding with its contiguous neighbours to share intelligence and ultimately set up an intelligence fusion centre in Abuja. Joint border patrols and joint trainings are other aspects of the envisaged cooperation. At the international level, Nigeria has added the entities called Boko Haram and its splinter group, Ansaru, as well as the individual Abubakar Mohammed Shekau, leader of the Boko Haram, to the United Nations Al-Qaida sanctions list. While we realize the limitations of those sanctions against those entities and the individual, we also understand the nexus between criminality and terrorism and the growing collaboration between the two.

All those measures can be implemented only with the requisite capacity, and that brings to the fore the issue of capacity-building in the war against terrorism. It is in this wise that Nigeria remains committed to working closely with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and all United Nations counter-terrorism entities. Nigeria is appreciative of the past and ongoing cooperation and assistance of the United Nations counter-terrorism entities, particularly the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, which is expected to undertake a follow-up visit to Nigeria in November and December 2014, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We also note with satisfaction the role being played by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre in the fight against terrorism, as well as the synergy evolving between the Centre and CTITF entities.

In the face of the accelerating global security challenges, the cyber threat has become coterminus with the violence of terrorism. Counter-terrorism, which can cause mass disruption of business communications,

manufacturing, service delivery and the workings of Governments, is indeed, another threat to humankind. Its danger emanates from the damage it can cause to our most valuable assets — the data and information that power our productivity and support our economies. Every attack, regardless of its target, poses a global threat and could imperil commerce and communications among all nations, due to the interconnections of digital infrastructure and networks, as well as the interdependencies of national and regional economies. We must do more by developing an analogous approach against that danger.

One thing is clear — the war against terrorism on all frontiers can be achieved only through the firm and determined resolve of all States Members of the United Nations. We therefore urge the General Assembly to continue that coordinated approach towards combating terrorism. It is Nigeria's fervent hope that the fourth review will provide new insights and impetus for enhancing the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Nigeria commiserates with the Government of Turkey on the abduction of its Consul General, his staff and their families, including three children, by militants fighting for an Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in Iraq a few days ago. I also wish to seize this opportunity to extend the gratitude of my delegation to all Member States for their concern and cooperation during Nigeria's latest travails in the hands of the terrorists.

Mr. Benítez Rodríguez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, the delegation of the Republic of Paraguay thanks President John Ashe for convening this meeting on the fourth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We would also like to express our appreciation for the valuable report of the Secretary-General (A/68/841), which was introduced yesterday, and for the work of the Turkish delegation in facilitating the work on draft resolution A/68/L.50, on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to be adopted by the General Assembly.

I take this opportunity to convey our solidarity with the Government and people of Turkey, who were recently victims of acts of terrorism in Iraq, which we strongly condemn.

The Republic of Paraguay reaffirms its total commitment to the fight against international terrorism in all its manifestations, and reiterates that it will decisively continue to carry out tasks aimed at promoting the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, based on its four pillars, with a general focus on the national and regional levels and in close cooperation with the agencies involved in the fight against that evil.

Paraguay believes that international cooperation is the most effective tool in the fight against terrorism. Accordingly, I would like to share with the Assembly some of the achievements we have made in the past few years. My country has ratified 13 international instruments relating to the fight against terrorism and is also party to the two treaties in force in our region. In 2010, our national Congress enacted law 4024/2010, which punishes acts of terrorism, terrorist association and terrorist financing. In 2011, law 4503/2011 on freezing funds and financial assets was enacted; and, in 2012, its respective statutory decree was also passed. In 2013, decree 11200/2013 entered into force, by which Paraguay's strategic plan to combat money-laundering, the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was adopted.

Moreover, in February 2012, the Financial Action Task Force, after noting significant progress, recognized Paraguay's work in its fight against money-laundering and terrorist financing. As a result, it was removed from the Task Force's monitoring process. All those steps, along with others that I will not mention here, were taken in compliance with the international commitments Paraguay has undertaken in the fight against the scourge of terrorism.

I am pleased to report that, during the fourteenth ordinary session of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), held in February at the Organization of American States headquarters, in Washington, D. C., Paraguay was unanimously elected to the vice-presidency of the Committee for the period 2014-2015, joining Canada, which holds the presidency for that same period. Being Vice-President motivates us even further to resolutely support the efforts undertaken by the United Nations and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force so as to strengthen and optimize international cooperation with medium- and long-term goals.

In recent years, Paraguay has participated actively in the activities of CICTE, which helped strengthen national structures involved in the fight against terrorism and develop the plans established by CICTE. As part of those activities, in 2012, Paraguay hosted a course on technical aspects in managing and handling

cybersecurity incidents. In 2013, it hosted a specialized national workshop on monitoring terrorism and terrorist financing and a course on travel document examination and fraud prevention. The Iberoamerican Congress and Fair on Information Security was also held recently.

All those activities, in addition to strengthening the capacities of law enforcement personnel from immigration and customs in different areas, demonstrate the Government's decisive work in meeting its commitments worldwide. The delegation of Paraguay reiterates that the fight against terrorism must be based on full respect for the rule of law and human rights, which are elements that we believe to be essential to eradicating that scourge.

Finally, we once again express our gratitude for the holding of this event and the report of the Secretary-General, and we encourage States to continue to support the various mechanisms of the United Nations to strengthen international cooperation in the fight against terrorism in all forms.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I would like to thank President Ashe for organizing this important meeting on the fourth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Ambassador Halit Çevik, the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, for his efforts in facilitating the consultations and reaching a consensus on the draft resolution to be adopted at the outcome of today's meeting.

At the outset, I want to convey my Government's profound condolences to the Governments and peoples of Pakistan and Iraq in connection with the recent spate of deadly attacks in those countries. I also wish to express my country's solidarity with Turkey and join the calls for the immediate and safe release of all the kidnapped Turkish diplomats and other citizens in Mosul, Iraq. Those attacks are a stark reminder of the growing threat of terrorism to international peace and security and to the political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and social and economic development of all States.

Today, as the world is still suffering from terrorism and the growing frequency and magnitude of terrorist acts are aimed at shattering the edifice of our societies, a comprehensive approach to combatting that scourge through concerted international action remains as vital as ever. The nature of terrorism and its increasing connection with other threats to international peace and security require close cooperation among States, including through the establishment of a more coordinated, coherent and systematic United Nations approach.

While recognizing the significance of addressing all conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, we stress the need to intensify efforts for conflict resolution on the basis of the generally accepted norms and principles of international law, particularly those relating to respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of States.

Conflict-affected territories, especially those under foreign military occupation, often provide fertile grounds for terrorists and other non-State actors who use terrorism as a means of achieving their illegal goals. The accumulation of armaments and ammunition in those territories beyond international control and the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related materials to non-State actors pose a serious threat to regional and international peace and security.

The war on terrorism cannot and must not be used to target any religion or culture. That principle must be part and parcel of any counter-terrorism strategy. All States should be united in supporting various initiatives towards enhancing intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Strengthening cooperation within such initiatives will serve to prevent misconceptions, defamatory manifestations and the deliberate labelling of religions and will contribute to the efficiency of counter-terrorism efforts.

No State is immune to terrorism, and Azerbaijan is not an exception. For many years, Azerbaijan has been a target of well-known international terrorist groups, including State-sponsored ones, the ideology of which is based on historical racial and religious prejudice and hatred. Those groups present a serious threat to Azerbaijan's national security and to the security and well-being of our region as a whole.

No country can completely eliminate terrorism alone, either. Therefore, Azerbaijan has always striven to strengthen the global fight against that menace. Combating terrorism was among Azerbaijan's top priorities during its membership of the Security Council in 2012 and 2013. On 4 May 2012, Azerbaijan organized a high-level meeting of the Security Council (see S/PV.6765) on strengthening international cooperation

in the implementation of counter-terrorism obligations, which was presided over by the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev. In March 2013, Azerbaijan hosted an international conference on strengthening cooperation in preventing terrorism, co-organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

As a responsible member of the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations, Azerbaijan is actively engaged in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue. In past years, the capital of Azerbaijan has become a destination for many high-profile and action-oriented events, such the World Summit of Religious Leaders and the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan organizes annually the Baku International Humanitarian Forum and various youth-related international events. My country will host the first-ever inaugural European games in 2015 and the Islamic Solidarity Games in 2017. Azerbaijan will continue to play its role as a bridge, and will enhance its contributions to the ultimate goal of promoting international peace and security and fostering tolerance and understanding worldwide.

Mr. Adala (Kenya): At the outset, my delegation would like to express its appreciation for the dedicated manner in which Ambassador Halit Çevik of Turkey and his team has facilitated this process.

The adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly in September 2006 marked an important watershed in international efforts in the war against terrorism. However, eight years down the line, terrorism remains one of the greatest challenges to global peace and security. That is a clear indication that terrorist groups the world over are adopting new strategies in spreading violent extremism, destroying innocent lives and property and taking advantage of unresolved conflicts and fragile States.

In the case of Kenya, continued conflicts in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region continue to provide a conducive environment for terrorism to fester. In Somalia, despite progress in stabilization and State-building, in which Kenya plays a crucial part under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the terrorist group Al-Shabaab continues to threaten Kenya's security and regional security by staging cross-boundary attacks.

Terrorist acts cannot be condoned or justified in any way whatsoever, as they constitute flagrant violations of human rights and international law. Such acts also endanger national, regional and international peace and security. Kenya, like other members of the international community, condemns and rejects the use of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as we believe that terrorism cannot be justified for any reason or for any cause.

Closely related to the spread of terrorism is transnational organized crime and regional security challenges. Those include the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons, piracy, the huge humanitarian and refugee crisis created by conflicts, human trafficking, money laundering and the illicit trade in narcotics and ivory, among other factors. The tackling of those challenges has a direct bearing on effectively countering terrorism.

My delegation reaffirms Kenya's commitment to all the regional and international instruments established to combat terrorism and counter violent extremism. Among them are Security Council resolution 1624 (2005), which deals specifically with the issue of incitement, and resolution 1373 (2001), which established the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee, as well as the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, bodies with which Kenya has a constructive engagement, especially in terms of institutional and capacity-building initiatives.

Kenya would therefore like to take this opportunity to underscore the need to enhance international cooperation and coordination in order to fast-track the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. My delegation lauds the creation of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the work being done by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force in that regard. Kenya also appreciates the role played by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the area of capacity-building. However, much more remains to be done in terms of enhancing coordination between those institutions in order to effectively support regional and national efforts to counter-terrorism and develop a coherent and effective international strategy in that regard.

As part of its obligations in implementing the Global Strategy and also to ensure regional and international peace and security, Kenya has, among other measures, legislated anti-terrorism law, created a national counter-terrorism centre and an anti-terrorist police unit. My

country also works closely with its neighbours in the East African Community in combating terrorism. Kenya also continues to play a vital role as a peacemaker in Somalia through AMISOM and in conflict mediation in the region through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. My country is also involved in the African Union's African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism and is a member of the Eastern and Southern African Anti-money-laundering Group.

In conclusion, my delegation supports the adoption of the consensus draft resolution (A/68/L.50), and would once again like to reiterate its commitment to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its attendant instruments and mechanisms.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for the fourth biennial review of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I also commend the Turkish Mission's role, in particular the tireless efforts of my good friend, His Excellency Ambassador Halit Çevik, and his team for facilitating negotiations on the fourth biennial review. Additionally I would like to welcome the Secretary-General's recent report (A/68/841) on the activities of the United Nations system in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Afghanistan aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (A/68/PV.94). I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

My country has been and still is one of the biggest victims of terrorism in the world. Afghan men, women and children are affected every day by terrorism and violence. As a result of that pernicious threat, Afghans regularly see their loved ones killed in suicide and roadside bombings, their clinics and schools destroyed, and their important public figures assassinated. Recent weeks have seen some particularly horrific attacks. My Government condemns in the strongest terms the recent attack on the Indian Consulate in Herat, the kidnapping of 35 university professors in Ghazni province this week, the recent assassination attempt against one of the two front-runners in Afghanistan's presidential elections, and the gruesome attack on personnel of the Turkish EMTA construction company in Jalalabad province in Afghanistan.

My Government also condemns acts of terrorism all over the world in all their forms and manifestations. We were deeply saddened by the most recent act of terror committed in our neighbouring country, Pakistan, where militants attacked the Karachi airport and killed over a dozen individuals. We condemn the unforgiveable acts of Boko Haram in Nigeria. We also deplore the violence in Mosul, Iraq, at the hands of terrorist groups, and the gruesome kidnapping of Turkish diplomats in that country.

Recognizing the continuing threat of terrorism in our country, counter-terrorism policies are central to Afghanistan's national security strategy. Over the past decade, together with our international partners, Afghanistan has made major strides in addressing and weakening terrorist networks in the country. Those efforts continue as the Afghan National Security Forces assume a greater role in all security activities across the country, including counter-terrorism operations. The increasing capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces were evident during the recent first round of elections in my country, when the Afghan National Security Forces secured polling centers around the country and ensured the safety of Afghan voters on election day.

Moreover, we have strengthened our counter-terrorism legal framework to appropriately address the threat of terrorism in the country. Afghanistan is party to 13 international conventions and protocols concerning terrorism, and we have adopted a multitude of national laws to combat terrorism and other forms of organized crime. Those include the Law on Combating the Financing of Terrorism and the Law on Combat against Terrorist Offences, for example.

We are working closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate, and have submitted relevant national reports on implementation. We also work closely to implement relevant United Nations sanctions regimes, and commend the valuable work of the sanctions committees, including the Al-Qaida sanctions regime mandated by Security Council resolution 1267 (1999), the Taliban sanctions regime mandated by Security Council resolution 1988 (2011), and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. While we acknowledge the effectiveness of sanctions, we call for further regional cooperation in their implementation to ensure their further success.

Terrorism is a menace that plagues the whole region. It is crucial that Afghanistan's neighbours and countries in the region play their role in contributing to peace and security in my country. My Government calls for putting an end to safe havens and sanctuaries beyond our borders, which have been used by terrorists and insurgent groups against the people of Afghanistan, international forces and the wider region.

For our part, Afghanistan has intensified cooperation at the regional level, including through dialogue with regional partners through bilateral, trilateral and multilateral processes to effectively deal with the problems of terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations. In order to eliminate terrorism and bring peace and prosperity, my Government is also actively pursuing reconciliation efforts with the Taliban, including through initiatives aimed at halting extremist violence at its very roots.

To that end, in September 2013 Afghanistan's High Peace Council organized an international conference for Islamic scholars and peace from across the globe in Kabul to discuss ways that religious leaders can contribute to peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region. During the conference, Islamic scholars declared suicide attacks un-Islamic and emphasized the need to use the religious practices and teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah to eliminate violence and build peace. We believe that such initiatives are instrumental in promoting a culture of peace and dialogue.

When the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the General Assembly in 2006, it demonstrated a collective international commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Today, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, along with all four of its associated pillars, has been implemented at the national, regional and international levels. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force has convened a number of important initiatives, in many of which Afghanistan has been an active participant. We applaud the Task Force office for organizing, in Geneva in June 2013, the high-level International Counter-Terrorism Focal Points Conference on addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, and welcome its outcome.

We express our deep concern about the evolving challenge posed by non-State actors seeking weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We call on Member States to take the necessary steps to ensure that non-State actors and terrorists do not gain access to such weapons, and we commend United Nations bodies and Member States for providing capacity-building assistance to States seeking to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). To that end, the recent seminar on the contribution of resolution 1540 (2004) to regional and global disarmament, held in Kazakhstan in March, was an important step forward.

Terrorism continues to threaten peace and security in Afghanistan and in the region, but ultimately terrorism is a global threat. It is not limited to any religion, region, country, national group or ethnicity. We continue to watch with horror the upsurge in terrorist attacks around the world, not only in our region but also in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Europe. Afghanistan deplores all acts of terror in any region by any group, and is committed to the eradication of terror at its roots. To that end, we commend the efforts of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and call for its widespread implementation moving forward.

Mr. Ben Sliman (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank President Ashe for having organized this debate on the fourth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I congratulate the Secretary-General for the quality of his report (A/68/841) highlighting the activities of the United Nations in implementing the Strategy. I would also like to thank the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Turkey, Mr. Çevik, for the praiseworthy efforts he and his entire team have made in facilitating the consultations on draft resolution A/68/L.50, on the fourth United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (see A/68/PV.94).

Today's debate is of great importance because of its focus on the threat of terrorism, which continues to pose a growing threat to international peace and security, given the tensions and risks that define the current regional and international geopolitical context, as well as the rapid shifts within Al-Qaida and its affiliates on the geographic and structural levels. My delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in this debate, which allows my country to reiterate its strongest possible condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and its full adherence to the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Tunisia has always shown a strong commitment at the national, regional and international levels to combating the threat of terrorism. Tunisia has criminalized all activities that support terrorism and undertaken a reform of Tunisian counter-terrorism and money-laundering legislation so as to ensure conditions conducive to equitable justice and respect for physical safety in accordance with its international human rights obligations. Moreover, Tunisia continues to strengthen its institutional and operational framework to fight against the phenomenon in an efficient manner.

At the regional and subregional levels, Tunisia has also joined almost all the regional and subregional initiatives aimed at strengthening cooperation and coordination in the field. Tunisia's commitment has also been seen in the signing of a number of bilateral agreements with its neighbours to fight terrorism, which involve in particular assessment of the terrorism threat and the elimination of its sources of financing. Furthermore, Tunisia has ratified all regional conventions on the fight against terrorism, including the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, and the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism.

Deeply convinced that the fight against terrorism exceeds the capacities of any one State or of any international organization, Tunisia has also joined most of the international conventions and treaties dealing with the fight against terrorism and spares no effort in fulfilling its obligations pursuant to the Global Counter-Terrorist Strategy. Similarly, Tunisia appreciates the cooperation and the technical assistance of the United Nations entities responsible for the fight against terrorism, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, which recently organized a regional workshop in Tunisia on the freezing of assets under resolution 1373 (2001) and a regional workshop in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on prosecuting terrorist cases in the context of respecting human rights and the rule of law, from 28 to 30 May 2014 and from 2 to 3 June 2014, respectively.

Insofar as terrorism has no religion or nationality and insofar as it is multifaceted with changing ways and means, terrorists today increasingly rely on new communications technologies and forge increasingly close links with organized crime. Any counter-terrorism strategy, be it regional or international, must integrate changes in the design and implementation of their modus operandi.

On another level, Tunisia believes that measures for purely security purposes are insufficient. We are also convinced that the persistence of political injustices at the international level, the failure to find solutions to some conflicts, the existence of economic disparities, exclusion and defamation of religion should also be taken into account as they help to fuel hatred and the rejection of others, boost extremism and foster the indoctrination and recruitment of terrorists.

The terrorist threat continues to be an international challenge that can be met only with greater international cooperation towards the emergence of a comprehensive, concerted and firm response, in particular through a balanced implementation of the Global Strategy, and a uniform approach based on consensus to which all stakeholders, including Governments, international, regional and subregional organizations, civil society and media, can subscribe, avoiding duplication of efforts and broadening our ability to prevent terrorism, fight it and limit its impact.

Tunisia therefore wishes to draw attention to the importance of building the national security arrangements capacities and security arrangements of Member States, with respect to both information-gathering and the proper investment in equipment, in order to efficiently fight terrorism, money-laundering, suspicious movements of capital and the proliferation of weapons and in responding to terrorists' use of new communications technologies.

Mr. Ceriani (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the priority that the President of the General Assembly has accorded to the fourth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and note in particular the outstanding work done by Ambassador Y. Halit Çevik, Permanent Representative of Turkey, and his team in leading the review process. I also take this opportunity to forcefully condemn the kidnapping of the Consul General and staff of the Turkish consulate in Mosul as well as the events in Nigeria and other violent acts in Pakistan.

The delegation of Uruguay associates itself with the position set forth by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and welcomes the report of the Secretary-General for this year (A/68/841). The report

refers to information provided by the States Members of the United Nations denoting their commitment to the counter-terrorism strategy and international regulatory regime designed to address the problem, as well as to the issuance of domestic legislation in support of the fight against terrorism and related crimes. I also wish to express my thanks for the information provided by the organs of the United Nations system.

In November 2012, our country received the visit of the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and his team, who met with public agencies of the executive and judicial branches of the Government and other State entities that have jurisdiction over regulations and actions in the fight against international terrorism. Earlier this year, we received the final report stating that our country is on track to combat this problem but must make regulatory updates, narrow border controls, link our migration databases with INTERPOL, and continue monitoring and regulating terrorist financing.

In May 2014, the new Executive Director of the Committee, Mr. Jean-Paul Laborde, followed up the visit made in 2012 for the purpose of discussing areas that needed improvement and to exchange ideas about the means for technical cooperation that the Organization can provide in order to put us in the best possible position to counter international terrorism. We welcome the new visit in the understanding that it is not enough to make a diagnosis if there is no follow-up with a treatment for the problem. It is clear that the close link between Uruguay and the Counter-Terrorism Committee will benefit our country in terms of fighting crime at home and will also result in a benefit to the international community as a whole, keeping in mind that terrorism is a transnational phenomenon that only can be addressed effectively by appealing to the cooperation of all countries of the world.

With respect to the issue of laundering money derived from illicit activities which are mainly responsible for funding international terrorism, our country is fully convinced that organized crime and terrorism financing have brought and are bringing inestimable damage to our societies. Suffice it to say that, according to the estimates of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the damage amounts to $2.1 trillion annually from organized crime, which has unexpected effects in our villages. We are also absolutely convinced that it is essential to confront this scourge with the greatest determination in all areas possible and with all the tools at our disposal, that is, in a complete, comprehensive and determined manner.

Such has been the attitude developed by Uruguay in its role as President pro tempore of the South American Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, the regional intergovernmental organization that brings together countries in the Americas, whose principal objective is to make its member States' legislation consistent with a complete and comprehensive policy for combating the crime of money laundering and terrorist financing, and to promote actions that integrate financial and operational aspects and all public agencies responsible for those areas. Without going into detail, the work of the Task Force and its evolution in the twenty-first century are proof of the regional and subregional commitment to combating terrorism and its attendant crimes.

As recently announced, Uruguay reaffirms its decision to work in a constructive and collective manner with other delegations in order to strengthen the system for combating international terrorism in all its manifestations by simultaneously implementing the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, with equal emphasis on each, as noted in the statement made on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

To conclude, I refer to the General Assembly resolutions that recommend that the analysis of the draft project on the articles for a framework convention on international terrorism be finalized as soon as possible. We understand that all that remains to be done is to define international terrorism and the scope of the acts to be covered by the Convention, although that will hardly be a simple task. Nevertheless, in the name of the higher goal of endowing ourselves with a general international norm on combating international terrorism, we hope that the necessary work will be concluded at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): Let me begin by thanking President Ashe for convening this meeting. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Ambassador Halit Çevik of Turkey for so ably facilitating the negotiations for this year's draft resolution (A/68/L.50), which we hope will be adopted today by consensus.

Our position on terrorism is unambiguous. We strongly condemn and reject terrorism in all its forms

and manifestations. We are committed to working together within the framework of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to ensure that those responsible for and involved in despicable acts of terror are prosecuted and punished. The Government of Bangladesh has strongly supported the United Nations playing active role in countering terrorism, which has unfortunately spread to the four corners of the world.

We would also like to reaffirm that no motivation whatsoever can justify resorting to acts of terrorism. Those who choose to pursue that deceitful path do not have faith in their own agenda and actually delegitimize their cause. Let me also re-emphasize that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, citizenship or ethnic group. We stress that tolerance, the promotion of a culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations, and interfaith and intercultural understanding are among the most important pathways for promoting cooperation and successfully combating terrorism.

Recurring acts of terrorism continue to pose a significant security challenge to humankind as a whole. As terrorist groups and non-State actors choose their targets without discrimination, their modes of operation continually evolve and they devise more complex ways to carry out their heinous acts with deadlier consequences. The use of technology, including information technology and social media, has enabled the creation of a network among terrorist networks, non-State actors and transnational criminals. Those developments pose new challenges to State apparatuses and traditional approaches to combating terrorism.

As the terrorist threat continues to evolve and manifests itself differently in different parts of the world, we must also constantly adapt our responses. We would, however, like to underscore that any indiscriminate response to counter-terrorism without due respect for fundamental human rights would be self-defeating, and would in fact conflate the root causes of terrorism. This review is a good opportunity to update and strengthen the United Nations efforts to ensure that our responses to terrorism are as holistic and as multilayered as required to address the evolving nature of terrorism in our time.

Countering terrorism remains at the top of our agenda. In recent years, the government of Bangladesh has made sustained efforts to combat terrorism and the financing of terrorism. It has maintained a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism and taken a number of bold, pragmatic and concrete steps to ensure that the soil of Bangladesh is not used by the purveyors of terrorism against the interest of anyone, including our neighboring countries, thereby making our region safer and more secure. The adoption of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009, with amendments in 2013, and the Money Laundering Prevention Act of 2009, along with supporting legislation and strategies, as well as monitoring and implementation mechanisms on countering terrorism, has helped Bangladesh combat terrorism to a great extent. The counter-terrorism strategy that the Government of Bangladesh has adopted has drawn heavily from the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Bangladesh is committed to countering terrorism not only nationally but within the wider context of South Asia, though the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). At the five most recent SAARC summit meetings, Heads of Government of SAARC countries have stressed the need to combat terrorism by strengthening cooperation at the regional level. Exchanges of experience, joint training programmes and periodic meetings of SAARC Home Ministers are indicative of that spirit of cooperation. Bangladesh is also involved in counter-terrorism initiatives under the aegis of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.

As I mentioned earlier, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy remains central to our efforts to countering terrorism. We are also committed to the full implementation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on counter-terrorism, including Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004), which provide a fundamental framework for international efforts to prevent and fight terrorism and to develop national and regional counter-terrorism capacities.

The global counter-terrorism agenda and strategy need to evolve through continued dialogue and must be strengthened through globally coordinated approaches, cooperation, capacity-building and sharing of best practices. The need for effective coordination within the United Nations system in the process of implementing the Strategy cannot be sufficiently stressed. We also believe that the United Nations has a key role to play in capacity-building at both the national and regional levels.

It is only logical that every region or State will approach that process guided by its own strategic

security concerns and priorities. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy can serve as an anchor for situating the different regional and national counter-terrorism strategies around its four pillars. We believe that combating terrorism is a collective responsibility, and that the United Nations counter-terrorism efforts reflect our collective commitment and aspiration to protecting humankind from the scourge of terrorism.

Ms. Rodríguez Pineda (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala categorically rejects all acts of terrorism and reiterates its commitment to the prevention and fight against that scourge. It is discouraging to see the scourge continue to spread and intensify with an increasing number of victims of terrorist acts. Of course, we recognize the important achievements that have been made in the fight against terrorism, but it is evident that we can and must do more.

My delegation welcomes today's consideration of the United National Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, first because it gives us a chance to assess the implementation of the Strategy, bearing in mind its successes and its deficiencies, and secondly because it contributes to a growing awareness of the Strategy with the aim of promoting its effective use. The relevance of the Strategy depends on its implementation, which depends primarily on us, the Member States. Accordingly, the current review allows us to consider appropriate actions, learn from them and identify additional measures to assist the membership in the implementation of the Strategy.

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report (A/68/841), which allows us to update our understanding of and assess the praiseworthy initiatives of the United Nations system. I should like to underline a few matters of importance to my delegation that were the subject of negotiations in draft resolution A/68/L.50.

First, the United Nations must lead the coordination of counter-terrorism efforts in an integrated and effective way. The General Assembly is the intergovernmental forum most suited to dealing with terrorism, both because of its universal membership and because of the nature of the topic at hand. Our focus must therefore not be on the risks incurred by any one country, but on a concerted effort on the part of all countries. In the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, we have a common interest. Similarly, there is a need to ensure consistency throughout the entire United Nations system in its various counter-terrorism activities. We reiterate our support for the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which has demonstrated its capacity for coordination and efficiency in leading the system, and we trust its work.

Secondly, we stress the necessity of strengthening international cooperation as a platform for the global effort to eliminate terrorism. We are firmly convinced that only genuine and efficient international cooperation that allows us to prevent and combat all acts of terrorism will provide an effective and sustainable response to the scourge of terrorism at the global level. In that regard, we cannot pass up this opportunity to emphasize the importance of the regional and subregional dimensions. The commitment of my region to combating terrorism through the Organization of American States, which has acquired valuable experience in the fight against terrorism within the inter-American system, has been exemplary.

Thirdly, we wish explain our concerns about the phenomenon of kidnapping and hostage-taking by terrorist groups. We understand that such incidents pose a major challenge in certain regions of the world. Nevertheless, this is a matter that has not been regulated by international law and that raises conceptual differences. Moreover, any future regulation must bear humanitarian and human rights considerations in mind. For all those reasons, we invite the General Assembly to continue studying the subject and to consider conducting a review of existing international law to bridge existing gaps and thereby avoid incompatibilities with the domestic laws of each country or region.

Fourthly, we believe that the effectiveness of our counter-terrorism efforts are related to our capacity to deal successfully with the conditions that fuel that phenomenon. Over the past decade, we have acquired a number of operational tools to address the issue and to cooperate effectively, bearing in mind the needs and particularities of each region. Nevertheless, there is still a need to adopt a comprehensive counter-terrorism convention as soon as possible, in particular for the multidimensional character of the problem. A comprehensive convention should include existing tools to combat international terrorism and would complement the Global Strategy.

Finally, we cannot have a Strategy that is not scrupulously respectful of the rule of law and human rights. We reaffirm our strict observance of due process, and we recognize the efforts and important work done

by the Office of the Ombudsperson, particularly in the area of sanctions, to improve the effectiveness and transparency of United Nations sanctions.

In conclusion, my delegation thanks Ambassador Çevik and his team for their leadership and guidance in the negotiation process, which was complex and extensive and in which we participated actively.

Mr. Aldahhak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to add my voice to those of others who have condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, no matter the justification or the identity of the perpetrators.

I would also like to reiterate the crucial importance of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the adoption of which was considered a culmination of efforts to combat terrorism. My delegation hopes that the fourth review of the Strategy and the draft resolution (A/68/L.50), which is the fruit of our negotiations, will lead to a better implementation of the Strategy and other international counter-terrorism instruments in order to reach our common goal of eliminating that scourge.

My delegation believes that the United Nations is the principal nexus for international cooperation in eliminating terrorism as a serious threat to the international peace and security, stability and the prosperity of nations. If we are to succeed in that task, we must respect international law and the Charter of the United Nations; we must avoid duplication of effort and not politicize the fight against terrorism, while ensuring greater transparency in the work of relevant United Nations bodies.

The terrorist attacks that my country, Syria, and many other Member States have suffered have demonstrated that despite the efforts made at the national, regional and international levels to combat terrorism, terrorist organizations remain capable of strengthening their capacities and of launching horrific suicide attacks and bombings. Certain terrorist organizations linked to Al-Qaida, such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, continue to find new bases from which spread and launch attacks in other countries throughout the world, all while profiting from the fact that certain States are not taking their counter-terrorism commitments seriously and are exploiting the assistance of other States that believe terrorism to be a a tool to further their own interests and policies. In that regard, Syria condemns terrorist attacks against our Iraqi brethren, and reiterates our solidarity with them and their Government as they confront terrorist groups that are causing suffering in both our countries.

The challenges that we face are enormous, including the issue of foreign terrorist fighters in many areas, including Syria. Fighters in Syria come from 80 different countries, which raises doubts about those countries' respect for and commitment to the Organization. We must therefore increase our joint efforts in accordance with international law to respond appropriately to issues such as incitement to violence and terrorism, the imperative of eliminating the sources of financing and weapons for terrorists who now have access to many different types of weapons, including weapons of mass destruction and their launching systems, and the need to prevent terrorists and their supporters from using the Internet, social networks or mass media for the purposes of glorifying terrorism or for financing and planning terrorist acts or for attracting new members through the promotion of extremist, destructive and erroneous ideas that have nothing to do with religion or any notion of civilization.

We must effectively strive to protect young people from improper exposure to the Internet and social networks for they can be deceived into leaving their families and countries to go to other countries and join terrorist organizations to commit acts of murder, pillaging and destruction before they are killed themselves or return to their home countries to plan other terrorist attacks there or in other States. We must eliminate the causes that could lead a young man or woman to leave Florida, Toulouse or London or any other place in the world to join terrorist groups in other States.

How could we imagine that a youth of 20 years of age, for example, could abandon the football that he loved and played every day in Florida for a bomb that would blow him to bits? We must put an end to practices that draw young people away and exploit them. We need to convince them that what they are doing is destructive and we must teach them that it will lead them to certain death. Those who are responsible — who finance them, facilitate their travel, help them to clandestinely cross borders and train them to use weapons — are Governments and States that we all know. We therefore reiterate the need to adopt additional measures to enhance border control and clamp down on work papers for and the free movement of terrorists.

Today, the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation stated that 15 Americans of Somali origin

travelled from Minneapolis to join a terrorist group active in Syria. The people of Syria, together with all peoples of the world, are engaged in a joint effort to end the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. We welcome the steps that have been taken, even if they often come too late.

In order to face those challenges, my delegation has proposed improvements to the draft resolution on the Strategy in order to address the issues of foreign terrorist fighters and the use of the Internet, information and communications technology and the media to incite and support terrorism. Other delegations have made similar proposals. My delegation participated in a positive manner in the negotiations and showed great flexibility because we are aware that the main objective is not the letter of the text — although that is important — but rather its effective implementation and the respect by all States for why we have come to an agreement. That must lead to a practical and effective steps forward.

My delegation welcomes the efforts made to support victims of terrorism. Unfortunately, in my country, Syria, there are very many of them. My delegation reiterates the need to assist them in getting back on their feet and resuming an effective role in their societies and to raise awareness against terrorism. The blood and suffering of victims of terrorism move us to increase our efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to deal with reasons that could lead to terrorism, although it can never be justified. We do that through respect for coexistence, dialogue between peoples, religions and civilizations.

Combating terrorism is a crucial and immediate necessity. My delegation hopes that the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will present us with two occasions to celebrate the achievements made in combating terrorism in the light of all the accomplishments we have made together over the past seven decades.

Finally, my delegation chooses not to respond to those delegations whose remarks are an attempt to draw attention away from the main objective of this meeting.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations A/68/PV.97

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

97th plenary meeting
Friday, 13 June 2014, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

In the absence of the President, Ms. Picco (Monaco), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 119 (*continued*)

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/841)

Draft resolution (A/68/L.50)

Mr. Al-Mouallimi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I know we are competing with the Netherlands-Spain football game, but I commend the great sacrifice that all of us in this Hall are making under difficult circumstances and welcome everyone here to a game of a different kind.

I would like to thank Ambassador Halit Çevik, the Permanent Representative of Turkey, and his team for facilitating the work on the fourth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I would also like to to express my deep regret for the terrible events that have occurred recently in Iraq, including the forced entry into and kidnapping of hostages from the Turkish Consulate, including families and many civilians who were working there, as well as the incidents in power plants and other acts of terrorism. We sincerely hope that the hostages will be able to return safely to their countries and families as soon as possible. Saudi Arabia also deplores the recent terrorist attacks in Pakistan that resulted in more than 30 deaths as well as large numbers of injured. These tragic events should increase our unity in the fight against international terrorism.

My country supports the principles outlined by the Permanent Representative of Egypt in his statement delivered on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/68/PV.94).

We believe that terrorism is one of the most dangerous challenges facing us today, and that combating it is no longer a national issue but one for the entire international community. While my country has suffered from terrorism, it has also taken many measures that are essential to overcoming this scourge. Nationally, regionally and internationally, we have examined and implemented the relevant resolutions and decisions of international law aimed at preventing the financing of terrorist attacks and protecting those who perpetrate them. We have responded to every international entity's calls to combat terrorism, implemented all the resolutions designed to achieve that end and acceded to every terrorism-related convention. In order to fight this scourge, accession to those conventions must be accompanied by genuine action.

The report of the Secretary-General on United Nations activities in implementing the Strategy (A/68/841) touches on many important issues, especially in paragraphs 10 to 19, which depict a phenomenon that has continued to grow despite all our efforts. The most dangerous of these remain individual terrorists, and foreign fighters who are well organized could also be added to this list. That is why my country has spearheaded efforts to address this issue from a

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legal perspective and to implement measures to punish those who travel to other countries to participate in terrorist attacks in whatever region, without forgetting those who incite such acts, even if they are far from the countries where they take place.

The Saudi authorities have undertaken many anti-terrorism measures. The Mohammed bin Nayef Centre for Counseling and Care focuses on providing information countering extremist ideologies, an example that could be replicated in other countries. This is an issue that should be dealt with holistically and not just from a security perspective. It can help us to respond to the need to respect human rights at the international and regional level. My country is working in every international forum, and especially through its chairmanship of the Advisory Board of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, in support of which we have pledged $100 million in addition to the $10 million originally promised. We are convinced of the increasing importance of the Centre's role in the United Nations system. It has been welcomed by many countries and is beginning to come into its own in strengthening capacities for combating terrorism. The Advisory Board offers the political support and advice countries need in order to meet the goals outlined. We therefore call on all States to support the Centre, not only financially but also through human resources, training and by providing the means to enable it to serve every country in the world.

My country has supported many international initiatives, such as those of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, of which we are a member and to whose efforts we contribute. We commend other United Nations efforts, such as those of the subsidiary committees of the Security Council, in combating terrorism, including the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), and others. Ms. Kimberly Prost, the Ombudsperson, plays a very significant role in this area, and, as we have seen recently, it is vital that the Ombudsperson's role as mediator become a permanent position.

The regrettable events that we saw last year and the tragedies we have seen recently clearly show that concentrating on a security-based solution, without taking other dimensions into account, will not solve the problem of terrorism. On the contrary, the phenomenon could seem to be vanquished but then reappear later with greater reach. We must combat terrorism in a comprehensive manner. In that regard, I would refer to one human rights report that states that the international community must be certain that it is not creating more dangerous terrorists than those already being combated. The rule of law, development, education, dialogue and combating occupation, as the most effective tools for rooting out terrorism, are therefore of paramount importance.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has condemned terrorism. It has also insisted on the importance of distinguishing between terrorism and the right of peoples to self-determination and their fight for sovereignty and against foreign occupation. Terrorism, no matter what form or manifestation it takes, including State-sponsored terrorism against unarmed innocents, is to be condemned. Many United Nations resolutions have noted that reality. There is a clear distinction between terrorism, which is a criminal act and one of the illegitimate faces of war, on the one hand, and the fight against occupation and foreign domination, on the other. The latter is a legitimate fight based on the right of peoples to self-determination — a right that is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law and the principles contained therein.

Today, more than ever, we need to agree upon a definition of terrorism. We must take serious measures to adopt a universal convention to combat terrorism, coordinate and unify the efforts of the United Nations, and bring together those entities that work to combat terrorism to optimize their use of financial resources and to protect innocent civilians. We must not forget that the worst form of terrorism is when States act against their own citizens and commit war crimes, acts of humiliation and other offenses against their people in order to instil fear in them. The use of barrel bombs, toxic gas and chemical weapons against civilians is a form of terrorism practised by a State in violation of international commitments and counter-terrorism conventions.

Such acts of aggression continue to this day. Those criminal activities have spawned the ever-widening proliferation and expansion of enclaves for terrorists and mercenaries. My delegation has insisted more than once on the seriousness of that major cause of terrorism; it is perhaps the main cause of the proliferation of terrorism, not just in our region, but in the entire world.

Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to take the floor in this important debate on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. At the outset, we would like to thank the

Secretary-General for the excellent report submitted for our consideration (A/68/841). I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Turkey for successfully facilitating the consultations on draft resolution A/68/L.50, which will be adopted at the end of our deliberations.

Cameroon reiterates its vigorous condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whether it be the taking of hostages, acts of piracy or attacks on persons or property. We note with profound concern that terrorism continues to seriously threaten international peace and security. To wage a substantial and effective fight against terrorism and transborder crime, Cameroon believes that the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy should be implemented in a consensual, integrated and balanced manner. It is important that the Charter of the United Nations and international law be respected, in particular the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Cameroon is firmly committed to the fight against the scourge through national measures and regional and international cooperation. In that context, our President, Mr. Paul Biya, recently played an active role in the Paris summit on security in Nigeria on 17 May, during which he solemnly declared war against the Boko Haram sect, which is characterized by its incitement to terrorism motivated by extremism and intolerance.

Our Government has acted with great efficiency and firmness for the release of French, Italian and Canadian hostages taken by Boko Haram in the north of our country. We have taken measures and joined forces with neighbouring countries, including Nigeria, and the international community to combat that terrorist sect. Further, our country was represented yesterday, 12 June, at another high-level summit on security in Nigeria, held in London. Cameroon hosted the fifty-ninth regular session of the Council of Ministers of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, held 5 December 2013 in Yaoundé, on the stakes, challenges and opportunities involved in cross-border management.

In the fight against piracy and in favour of maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon was chosen to be the home of the Gulf of Guinea Inter-Regional Coordination Centre, created at a summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission in June 2013 in Yaoundé, which will become operational very soon. I would underline that during that meeting the Heads of State and Government adopted important resolutions on the strategy for fighting terrorism, piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea, namely, a political declaration, a memorandum of understanding and a code of conduct. Cameroon emphasizes how important it is for the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate, as well as other partners, to help Member States, upon their request, with a view to fighting terrorism in an efficient manner.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with resolution 48/5, of 13 October 1993, I now call on the observer for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Wuchte (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe): Today is the fourth time that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been given an opportunity to present its efforts in supporting the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in this forum. The invitation to participate in the General Assembly's biennial review is yet another confirmation of the importance and depth of the partnership between our two organizations. More than that, the OSCE's presence today is evidence that regional organizations maintain a well-defined role and a well-received mandate in supporting their participating States in activities to translate the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism into action.

At the outset, let me reiterate the message that I conveyed to the General Assembly almost two years ago (see A/66/PV.120) that the OSCE Transnational Threats Department remains committed to and a reliable partner in working on the integration of the programmatic priorities that support the process of implementing the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy among our 57 participating States and 11 partners for cooperation. Although the primary obligation rests with States, we have every reason to believe that the variety of OSCE expertise and the wide scope of its capacity-building on anti-terrorism, border security, cyber security, human rights, policing and many other areas significantly contribute to the success of the global counter-terrorism efforts at the regional level.

To make those efforts more efficient, systematic and sustainable, following the 2012 United Nations review, the OSCE participating States adopted the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight

against Terrorism at the end of 2012 in Dublin. That unique document clearly highlights the operational principles and identifies the strategic focus of future OSCE counter-terrorism activities. Drawing on the Consolidated Framework's priorities in support of the United Nations, our activities have been organized to promote the implementation of the international legal framework against terrorism, to strengthen travel document security, to counter the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, to counter the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes and to help build public-private partnerships. Moreover, the framework provides us the vision to consider the new and emerging trends that we have undertaken this year with the Swiss chairmanship of the OSCE.

The OSCE participating States have committed to placing particular emphasis on the strategic area of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms in the context of counter-terrorism measures — which will be further illustrated in these remarks — through the work of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), consistent with and in support of pillar IV of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in embodying the commitment to measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.

Perhaps most importantly, the Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism highlights the need to further coordinate our efforts internally and to cooperate externally with the relevant stakeholders to counter terrorism. Internally, our Transnational Threats Department acts as the focal point of coordination in the secretariat to ensure all elements of our strategy are included. Externally, the OSCE pays particular attention to cooperation with the stakeholders of the international community, recognizing the leading role of the United Nations. In other words, we value our close relationship with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and its associated entities, as well as today's opportunity to highlight areas where we see even greater collaboration.

The essence of the effective support and tailored assistance offered by the OSCE to its participating States lies in the combination of actions by the OSCE secretariat, its institutions, such as ODIHR, and the 16 field operations that serve as an ear to the ground, aimed at facilitating communication and strengthening cooperation with the host countries on the strategic priorities identified by the Consolidated Framework. Some examples are the following.

The OSCE has successfully supported its participating States in their implementation of the universal anti-terrorism instruments, of which there are currently 19. We have a strategic partnership and joint action plan with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to ensure that our support is coordinated and complementary. The UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch and our experts share many ideas and activities throughout the OSCE region. The high ratification rate allows the OSCE to be one of the first organizations to focus on streamlining and reinforcing preventive measures that are related to the international legal framework against terrorism but not specified in it. Such efforts focus on, for example, promoting cooperation and strengthening the control mechanisms of legally used explosives and its precursors and facilitating the exchange of information at an early stage so as to counter preparatory acts of terrorism.

As the lead on anti-terrorism issues within the OSCE, I would like to share significant activities that are in line with the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, contained in document A/68/841 of 14 April, and consistent with other elements of the CTITF matrix of counter-terrorism projects and activities.

Cooperation with the United Nations and the participation of the various other experts at the 2014 annual OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference, organized recently in Interlaken, Switzerland, under the Swiss OSCE chairmanship, are a good practical example of sharing information and experience. Such OSCE conferences have become an important annual cross-dimensional discussion forum on current counter-terrorism issues and have benefited from the close OSCE-United Nations cooperation with the CTITF. They have included remarks by the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and sessions supported by national experts, as well as partners, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe and INTERPOL.

Summarizing the results of the debates, the Swiss chairmanship presented its conclusions. The specific recommendations focused on the financing of terrorism, namely, kidnapping for ransom; ensuring legality,

transparency and accountability in counter-terrorism; and responding to the phenomenon of individuals taking part in violent hostilities within or outside the OSCE area, that is, foreign fighters. We expect to work closely with our United Nations colleagues on the next steps, especially in the light of the United Nations efforts in all those areas.

Furthermore, one of the areas also highlighted in Interlaken and elsewhere in the OSCE's work is protecting the public from terrorism as a major, highly scrutinized and challenging task that requires a more systematic approach. That is why, in the field of countering the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, we have launched, jointly with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Transnational Threats Department's Strategic Police Matters Unit, a guidebook entitled *Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: a Community Policing Approach*. It is primarily intended for policymakers and senior police professionals but may also be useful to civil society groups with an interest in such issues, in particular community leaders. We are in close contact with CTED on possible ways to promote that approach.

Another initiative that we are pursuing jointly with the Global Counterterrorism Forum is to advance the role of women in countering the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. Last month, we held a workshop in Istanbul with civil society stakeholders to identify good practices and lessons learned in supporting their efforts to empower women to contribute in different capacities. We will hold a follow-up workshop for Government experts in Vienna in October. On the basis of both those events, we expect the Global Counterterrorism Forum to draft a good policy practice document on gender mainstreaming in countering violent extremism. We see that initiative as supporting the spirit of United Nations Security Council resolution 2129 (2013), which reaffirms the Council's intention to increase its attention to women, peace and security issues in all relevant thematic areas of work on its agenda, including threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

Besides the joint endeavour between the OSCE and the Global Counterterrorism Forum I mentioned earlier, strengthening the rule of law compliant criminal justice responses is another area of such collaboration. In that regard, the OSCE and Global Counterterrorism Forum plan to organize three national workshops in South-East Europe and Central Asia intended for criminal justice practitioners. In order to ensure a coherent approach, Member States can rest assured that the training workshops will be closely coordinated with other relevant international organizations. A first contact on such training has already been established with CTED.

Besides the aforementioned programmatic work, since 2012 the OSCE has been invited to take part in the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Working Groups on Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law and on Countering Violent Extremism, due to their relevance to the work of the OSCE in the field of countering terrorism.

Next, in the field of travel document security, let me also mention that the OSCE has continued to assist its participating States throughout the OSCE region in preventing terrorist movements across borders while strengthening border management. Key to these efforts is the fact that the documents, related issuing processes and border inspection tools meet international standards and specifications as set out by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Cooperation between OSCE and ICAO is strong, and both organizations work together on various capacity-building activities. It is worth noting that OSCE travel document security activities complement United Nations efforts focusing on the implementation of the Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). We are also supporting relevant United Nations structures with planning regional counter-terrorism activities related to border control and security in Central Asia.

Over the past several years, cybersecurity has emerged as an increasing concern to OSCE participating States. In the field of countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, we organized, from 2012 to 2013, four online expert forum discussions to stimulate information exchange on the latest trends and debates related to terrorist use of the Internet. In addition, we have in parallel facilitated and organized a series of national seminars, which have aimed to facilitate discussions among the public, authorities, experts and civil society at the national level for promoting a comprehensive understanding of the threat. Since 2005, we have regularly coordinated with the CTITF, CTED and UNODC in those efforts, and we stand ready to continue and, if possible, deepen that cooperation with United Nations counterparts in the area of cybersecurity.

Importantly, the OSCE recognizes that security goes beyond political and military issues and fully

encompasses the security of the individual human being. The OSCE regards the respect for human rights and the rule of law as an integral element of security. We will not succeed in combating and ultimately overcoming terrorism if the means to do so are not in conformity with human rights standards.

ODIHR, as mentioned earlier, assists OSCE participating States in strengthening the implementation of their human rights obligations and commitments through monitoring and capacity-building activities. In particular, through its Human Rights and Anti-Terrorism Programme, ODIHR, as mentioned earlier, assists OSCE participating States in strengthening the implementation of their human rights obligations and commitments through monitoring and capacity-building activities. In particular through its human rights and anti-terrorism programme, ODIHR assists participating States in developing and implementing human rights-compliant anti-terrorism policies and practices.

Some specific examples in support of pillar IV of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy include the development of training curricula for police officers on countering terrorism and protecting human rights, which aims to adopt an operational approach linking the analysis of potential human rights concerns with the daily work and actions of the police involved in counter-terrorism activities; producing, in collaboration with the Strategic Police Matters Unit, a practical manual for law enforcement officers on human rights in counter-terrorism investigations; training senior border officials on the protection of human rights when countering terrorism at borders, in collaboration with the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe; issuing a legal opinion at the request of the Government of Tunisia on Tunisian anti-terrorism legislation in December 2013, with recommendations aimed at enhancing compliance with international human rights standards; and lastly, conducting a human rights assessment of the situation of detainees at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. That is in line with ODIHR's objective to support participating States in meeting their commitments to respect human rights in the fight against terrorism.

I would now like to highlight a few more examples of other multidimensional approaches. We have produced a good-practices guide on non-nuclear critical energy infrastructure protection from terrorist attacks. That guidebook has been developed with the involvement of a wide range of Government and private business experts from OSCE participating States and international organizations such as the European Union and NATO. We were pleased to see that there was a side-event on infrastructure earlier this week by the United Nations.

Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Additionally, together with our Office of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, we are active in the field of suppressing money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We have a project that will include civil society and CTED on non-profit organizations, which is soon to hold its first event. Another independent institution of the OSCE is the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, which plays an active role in assisting participating States in recognizing the need for free media and free expression as an essential counterbalance to terrorist activity.

I would like to conclude by making three points.

First, I would like to restate my appreciation for the organization of this highly important review and for giving regional organizations such as the OSCE an opportunity to speak and to update Member States on what we are doing in support of the global efforts of the United Nations in preventing and countering terrorism. I strongly believe that such opportunities to take pause and review progress can only be seen as beneficial and encouraging further joint efforts.

Secondly, I want to reiterate that the OSCE stands ready to remain a substantive contributor for enhancing capacity at the national, subregional and regional levels to prevent and combat terrorism and for providing a framework for multi-stakeholder dialogue, awareness-raising, exchange of expertise and networking while implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the OSCE area. To that end, the OSCE would welcome opportunities to participate in relevant CTITF working groups as appropriate and receive regular updates on the activities undertaken by the different entities of the CTITF to thus ensure continued coordination and collaboration.

Thirdly and last, I trust that in two years, during the fifth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, we will be even more confident and efficient in transforming a number of the

positive words expressed today into action making our world significantly safer and more secure.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with resolution 44/6, I now give the floor to the observer of the Council of Europe.

Mr. Kocdjikov (Council of Europe): Allow me to join, on behalf of the Council of Europe, all those who have condemned the terrorist act in Mosul and expressed their solidarity with Turkey and the Turkish people.

It is an honour for me to address the Assembly and to be able to reiterate our commitment to support the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the landmark holistic, coherent and universal framework for international action against terrorism.

In 1945, the peoples of the United Nations determined to reaffirm their faith in fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. Four years later, in 1949 the Council of Europe was set up to safeguard respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The dream of our founding fathers was of one continent sharing the same spiritual and moral values, which are the common heritage of the European peoples and the true source of individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law — principles that form the basis of all genuine democracy.

Terrorism is the antithesis of those values. Back in 1978, the Council of Europe was the first international organization to determine that the prevention and suppression of terrorism are indispensable to the maintenance of the democratic structure of Member States. From the outset, the Council of Europe treated terrorist acts as serious — but nevertheless common — crimes. Historically, the first counter-terrorism measures agreed by the Council of Europe sought to limit the offences that could be seen as political and therefore be used as a reason to refuse to extradite or prosecute terrorists. Yesterday, the representative of Turkey (see A/68/PV.94) underlined the importance of the universal principle of *aut dedere aut judicare*, or "extradite or prosecute" .

The 2005 Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism broadened the scope of the criminal offences that could lead to terrorism. The review mechanism for the Convention is now functioning, the implementation of article 6 on recruitment for terrorism is ready, and the assessment of article 7 on training for terrorism is under way. I am grateful to the representative of the Russian Federation for his comments on the potential of the Convention to address new terrorism challenges (see A/68/PV.94).

To promote international cooperation in criminal matters, the Convention modified the existing Council of Europe extradition and mutual assistance arrangements, notably by excluding the political exception clause. To date, there are some 33 such instruments and amending protocols and we have a dedicated expert body working to facilitate their practical implementation.

The Council of Europe is active in countering the financing of terrorism, where we have an advanced convention and an efficient regional Financial Action Task Force-style monitoring body, the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL). That is the convention to which Georgia recently became party, as mentioned by the representative of Georgia (see A/68/PV.95) in his intervention.

Human beings should not fall victim to terrorism. Human rights should not fall victim to terrorism. Terrorists seek to promote a political agenda not through the democratic process, but through spreading fear. Therefore, to neglect democratic values in favour of expediency in suppressing terrorism would mean to give the victory to the terrorists. It is also likely to produce more terrorist recruits than it may stop. The response to terrorism must be respectful of the human rights of all those involved and must remain at all times strictly within the boundaries of the rule of law.

The 2002 Council of Europe Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism introduced measures looking far ahead into the future, such as those on the prohibition of arbitrariness, on the need of lawfulness in anti-terrorist measures, on the absolute prohibition of torture or on the rules for the collection and processing of personal data by any competent authority in the field of State security.

The European Court of Human Rights has developed a body of case law relevant to terrorism. The main tenet of its jurisprudence is that strong national security and protection of the population against terrorism are fully compatible with maintaining the democratic safeguards and respect for human rights. The Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER) is

preparing a database of the relevant case law of the Court, which will be available in the near future.

In a broader sense, everything that the Council of Europe does to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law addresses the conditions conducive to terrorism. The Council of Europe has endorsed, at the highest level of Heads of State and Government, intercultural and interreligious dialogue as a means to ensure that the diversity of European cultures is a source of mutual enrichment, not of conflict. The 2005 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe also committed to a new dialogue between Europe and its neighbouring regions — the southern Mediterranean, the Middle East and Central Asia.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors the problems of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination, prepares reports and issues recommendations to member States. The Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities has a monitoring system under which an advisory committee analyses legislation and practice and provides country-specific opinions and recommendations to improve minority protection. The Council of Europe has adopted a Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. The Charter reflects the growing awareness that education is the first line of defence against the rise of intolerance, which can lead to violence, extremism and terrorism.

A 2011 Council of Europe report, entitled "Living together: Combining diversity and freedom in the 21st-century Europe", concluded that

> "a better common life in twenty-first-century Europe depends relatively little on compulsion, and much more on convincing people of different cultures and beliefs that they actually need to live together, and on finding ways to make that easier".

Over the years, the Council of Europe has developed its comprehensive triad of setting legal standards based on common values, monitoring how they are put into practice and cooperating with member States to assist them in building their capacity to honour their commitment to respect and fulfil the standards.

As a regional organization with 47 member States, the Council of Europe contributes to the realization at the regional level of the pillars of the Global Strategy. We enjoy particularly close cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which includes an annual coordination meeting on terrorism issues, as well as with the European Union, where we have an over-arching memorandum of understanding. We regularly contribute, within our geographical and resource constraints, to the activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

The representative of Serbia, who spoke earlier today (see A/68/PV.96), mentioned a CTED visit to his country. On that occasion, two of my colleagues — one from the Terrorism Division and the other from MONEYVAL — participated in the CTED delegation. The visit drew heavily on the results of an ongoing project against money-laundering and terrorist financing that we had at that time in Serbia, which was a €2.2 million, three-year-long Council of Europe-European Union joint project. I believe that is a good example of how international organizations and actors can join forces and work hand in hand towards the same goal. We, of course, cooperate with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), and I would like to particularly commend CTITF for its contribution to the report (A/68/841) of the Secretary-General and in particular for the matrix of projects and events.

The Council of Europe is rapidly developing its cooperatic . with the new, dynamic and very productive platform: the Global Counterterrorism Forum. I would like to highlight a good practice by the Forum, namely, sending out to its members and partners regular updates, including information on upcoming activities. In that cooperation, the Council of Europe shares with others our experience and lessons learned and we learn from others. To give one example, in May 2013, the Council of Europe hosted in Strasbourg a conference on special investigation techniques, co-organized with CTED, OSCE and the League of Arab States. The conference gave an impetus to CODEXTER, which is now undertaking to review a Council of Europe recommendation on that topic in order to take into account the latest technological developments.

The Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, at their Summit in Warsaw, confirmed forcefully "that terrorism is unjustifiable under any circumstances and in any culture". Today, the

paragraph 1 of the very substantial text (A/68/L.50) that will shortly become a General Assembly resolution, condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes. Those words were probably the most often reiterated text of the draft resolution in statements made yesterday and today from this rostrum.

I would like to conclude by echoing the words of the representative of China: let us join hands and fight this scourge.

The Acting President: I should now like to consult members with a view to giving the floor to Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

If there is no objection, may I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly, without setting a precedent, to invite Mr. Rifai, to make a statement at this meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Rifai.

Mr. Rifai (United Nations World Tourism Organization): I am honoured to have the opportunity, on the behalf of the United Nations World Tourism Organization, to address the Assembly as it meets for the fourth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Travel and tourism have become today a central global phenomenon. In 2013, 1.087 billion international tourists travelled the world in one year, representing one in seven of the world's population making an international trip every year. That is in addition to the 6 billion tourist trips registered domestically within national boundaries every year. By 2030, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) forecasts that 1.8 billion international tourists will travel in a single year. That is indeed very far from the mere 25 million people who travelled internationally back in 1950. In that connection, today the travel and tourism industry creates one in every 11 jobs all over the world, generating $1.4 trillion in direct export earnings and representing 9 per cent of the world's total gross domestic product and 30 per cent of its total export of services.

This is indeed the age of travel, but that is precisely why it is important for me to be here in this Hall this afternoon. The infrastructure of travel and tourism today, both human and physical, is a very vulnerable and tempting target for terrorist attacks, and the terrorists know that very well. They know they can inflict economic and political damage by attacking travellers and tourism infrastructure. We have been reminded of that only recently by examples such as the airport in Karachi or the mall in Nairobi, Kenya. It is therefore vital to focus ever more on travel security measures and strategies that protect both visitors and host communities.

The UNWTO, as the United Nations specialized agency responsible for promoting sustainable and universally accessible tourism, is fully engaged in the international efforts aimed at maintaining tourism security. We are partnering with the United Nations system in order to respond effectively to Member States' calls for travel security and the modernization of border management systems, facilities and institutions at the national, regional and international levels, since they are all critical to ensuring that people can continue to travel and to do so safely. The UNWTO is also a unique United Nations agency, encompassing as it does more than 400 non-governmental affiliate members from the tourism sector across various elements of the tourism value chain. That enables us to facilitate links with the relevant players in the private sector in order to better assess and mitigate risks related to tourism.

Developing tourism responsibly means addressing security issues at a very early stage, not just from the perspective of resilience and sustainability but also, importantly, from that of care, responsibility and respect for human security and dignity. It is on that basis that the UNWTO has been working with the United Nations system, particularly the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), of which we are very much a member, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Civil Aviation Organization, among many other agencies.

In that context, I would like to highlight a few points. First, while security is crucial to healthy and sustainable travel and the tourism sector, it has also become clear that tourism is a very important development pillar for many countries around the world, promoting economic growth, reducing poverty and creating millions of jobs. It is therefore very important to recognize the fact that while travel and tourism need security, it is also very important to preserve social and economic stability and

the security associated with the economic growth that tourism brings.

Secondly, security issues are often given as reasons for cumbersome immigration and border procedures, but very often the processes are simply not aligned with current travel flows and security concerns. Intelligent and state-of-the-art use of technology in order to facilitate friendly, smooth travel that is respectful of human rights and dignity can and must go hand in hand with effective, high-level security measures. Security and openness are not a zero-sum game.

Thirdly, Member States have clearly indicated that tourism is often not properly addressed in national emergency plans, and most of the time is only tackled when an incident with major consequences actually occurs. In that regard, it is therefore important to adopt strategies that are proactive and preemptive, not reactive.

Last but not least, joint efforts and actions at the regional and international level should be put in place in order to produce international standards, guidelines, manuals and best practices. The prospective work of the UNWTO with the CTC and the CTITF is a good example of such joint action.

I sincerely hope that all of these issues will be taken into consideration in the next review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I look forward greatly to the Assembly's discussions, and I trust they will contribute significantly to the sustainable development of the tourism industry and many other growth-related sectors, and to their capacity to contribute to the post-2015 development agenda.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/68/L.50, entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review".

I give the floor to the representative of Georgia to introduce an oral revision to the draft resolution.

Mr. Kvelashvili (Georgia): I would first like to once again commend the Turkish delegation for its great efforts during the lengthy process of facilitating draft resolution A/68/L.50.

After consulting with many delegations represented in this Hall, we have come to an understanding that the draft resolution would be improved by adding a reference to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. I would therefore like to propose a small amendment to paragraph 30, in which the wording would become the following:

> "*Notes with appreciation* the activities undertaken in the area of capacity-building by United Nations entities, including the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force entities, inter alia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in coordination with other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations to assist Member States, upon their request, in implementing the Strategy, and encourages the Task Force to ensure focused delivery of capacity-building assistance, including in the framework of the Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism Initiative".

I hope this small amendment will meet with consent and that delegations will approve its inclusion in paragraph 30.

The Acting President: In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly will first take a decision on the oral amendment submitted by the representative of Georgia.

May I take it that the Assembly agrees to the adoption of the oral amendment?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/68/L.50, entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review", as orally amended. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/68/L.50, as orally amended, was adopted (resolution 68/276).

The Acting President: On behalf of the President of the General Assembly, I should like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador Halit Çevik of Turkey, who so ably and patiently conducted the discussions in the informal consultations and to all Member States for their excellent contribution to the successful coordination of resolution 68/276.

I now call on those delegations wishing to make general statements.

Mr. Ali (Sudan): My delegation has requested the floor to make a general statement following the adoption of resolution 68/276.

Allow me at the outset to pay tribute to the Permanent Representative of Turkey and his efficient and able team for their tireless efforts during the process of informal consultations on resolution 68/276, entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review", which was conducted in a transparent and open manner. My delegation participated actively and constructively in the process that led to the consensus on the resolution adopted by the General Assembly this afternoon.

In connection with paragraph 26 of the resolution, my delegation would like to emphasize the importance of maintaining multilateral efforts in combating terrorism through international and regional cooperation, which contribute positively to the promotion of the efforts and initiatives undertaken at the national level. My delegation strongly rejects the unilateral practices of some States accusing others of sponsoring and supporting terrorism. Such unjustified practices, which are politically driven by narrow interests, jeopardize the collective wisdom and multilateral efforts in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. My delegation calls on those States to refrain from such practices, which are inconsistent with international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation would like to reiterate its firm commitment to continuing to cooperate with the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): As the Assembly knows, on 14 January I was appointed by the President of the General Assembly to serve as facilitator for the consultations with Member States on the outcome of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review. On 10 June, I presented the draft resolution to the President of the General Assembly.

On this occasion, I would like to thank President Ashe for his confidence in me. Today, I welcome the adoption of resolution 68/276 on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review. I would like to thank all my colleagues and representatives for their kind words addressed to me and my team during the review. I also express our sincere gratitude for the expressions of solidarity on the occasion of the abduction of our collegaues in Mosul.

Following my appointment, during the period of almost six months in my capacity as facilitator, I paid visits to many colleagues and received their views on and support for the process. I held regional group meetings, as well as meetings with the participation of all Member States. During the process, transparency and inclusiveness were my guiding principles. From the very beginning, I tried to reach out to each and every delegation. I believe that each delegation had an equal opportunity to make their voice heard during the negotiations. The resolution reflects that understanding. We came a long way and, together, we achieved the outcome. I appreciate the spirit of cooperation displayed among colleagues during the process. I believe that that is an essential asset in our work. In that regard, the cooperation shown during the negotiations in order to produce the resolution was exemplary.

The resolution that we have just adopted is not a technical rollover. It is comprehensive and responds to the new trends and challenges of terrorism that we face. The consensus resolution is also a testament to the determination of Member States to eliminate terrorism. Once again, I would like to thank all my colleagues and delegates for their hard work and contribution to this process and for their cooperation.

The Acting President: I now call on those representatives who have requested to speak in exercise the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Zmeevsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia repudiates the fabricated accusations of territorial occupation and terrorism addressed to it. It is entirely unacceptable when, under the flag of combating terrorism, as currently taking place in Ukraine, activities to suppress protests are implemented with external support and blessings from abroad, using force against the civilian population with the support of radical nationalists. This unacceptable form of violence will lead to a full-fledged civil war, and constitutes nothing less than a crime against the Ukrainian people. Careful study is required on the Ukrainian use of prohibited types of weapons.

The accusation that Russia is participating in the escalation of tensions is untrue and unsubstantiated. Especially unacceptable are complaints that Russia has interfered in the situation in Ukraine by sending armed forces and weapons to the country. I will answer that with the words of the President of the Russian Federation,

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, who has stated that there are no Russian armed forces or instructors in south-eastern Ukraine. There are none and there will not be any; neither are we sending weapons there.

In addition, we have recently taken steps to decrease the number of Russian armed forces in our own territory close to the Ukrainian border. On 7 June, the President of the Russian Federation ordered the federal border services of the Russian Federation to strengthen the protection of the border between Russia and the Ukraine in order to eliminate illegal border crossings, and that is being implemented.

The same cannot be said for the Ukrainian side, which is not fulfilling its own commitments. On the night of 13 June, Ukrainian armoured vehicles and armed forces violated the State border of the Russian Federation in the Rostov region. We consider those actions by the Ukrainian side to be a violation of the basic provisions of international law and an illegal act that will not lead to a peaceful resolution of the armed conflict in south-eastern Ukraine. We call on Ukraine to end such acts of provocation, which are harming the process aimed at restarting Russian/Ukrainian dialogue.

We do not hide our concern about the situation and the increase in violations of basic rights, including those of our citizens in Ukraine, whose interests are being violated in the most intolerable manner. On 2 May, in Odesa, ultranationalists burned and killed dozens of their own citizens, including the elderly, women and children, a fact concerning which the Ukrainian mass media has remained silent. We are supposed to consider that evil act as one of patriotism. Never will the international community agree to such a cynical description of a crime against humanity. All those who perpetrated those crimes and war crimes in contravention of other norms and humanitarian law in Ukraine must be brought to justice.

Russia calls for an immediate end to the armed attacks and violence of the so-called anti-terrorist — but in fact punitive — operation in eastern Ukraine, and calls on Ukraine to draw back its troops and move towards a full implementation of the Geneva declaration of 17 April and the road map developed by the current Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the President of the Swiss Confederation. We continue to expect those steps from the new Government in Ukraine.

Russia is an unwavering foe of terrorism. We will never agree to such operations being launched against civilians in the fight against that scourge, or to the authority of the international community, including the United Nations, being manipulated for those ends. What the United Nations should do regarding the actions in Ukraine in order to end the violence and implement humanitarian tasks is, as stated by the representative of the Russian Federation in the Security Council, to consider how to combat the radicalization of social and political views that has led to violence and terrorism, among other things. First and foremost, we are speaking about the spread of extremism and terrorist ideologies under the banner of ultranationalism, neo-Nazism and fascism. That danger must be rooted out at the very source, immediately and effectively.

Within the framework of those tasks, we must create a unified front like that which once defeated fascism. What is impermissible is to attempt to use Nazism and the extremists who believe in it to serve geopolitical ambitions. We have gone through that once before. We must all remember what that led to in the 1930s.

Mr. Kasap (Ukraine): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor to speak in exercise of my right to reply to the comments of the representative of the Russian Federation.

(*spoke in Russian*)

It is truly unfortunate that my Russian colleagues were not able to react in an appropriate manner to the criticism and appeals addressed to you, Sir. That is understandable, however, given that nothing can justify Russia's actions towards Ukraine.

We offered our analysis of Russia's actions in our statement, and I will not repeat myself here. We simply wish to inform delegations present in this Hall today that while the Russians claim to be carefully and fraternally keeping an eye on what is happening in eastern Ukraine, they have also set themselves up as arbiters of who is right and who is wrong and are supplying weapons, fighters, armoured vehicles and even tanks to those fighting us in the east of the country — the very actions that they say are being taken against the peaceful citizens of Ukraine.

I would like to note the following. It does not matter how the Russian Federation describes the operation. The world is unfortunately already accustomed to the disinformation that Russia spreads through its

television broadcasts. What is important is the goal of our operations, which is to put an end to the terrorist acts perpetrated by the groups in Donetsk and Luhansk in order to ensure that the residents of those regions of Ukraine can live in peace. If Russia believes that the peaceful population of those regions is using mines and anti-aircraft weapons, kidnapping people, even children, and shooting prisoners, then it will be very difficult for us to find anything to speak about with them.

The Russians say there is no proof, but there is an enormous amount of proof. Only those who do not want to see or hear can repudiate such evidence. It is impermissible to lie, yet the Russians have tried to hide the facts from the entire international community. The General Assembly has already given its verdict on the activities of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, and the Security Council has often spoken against the Russian Federation's acts in eastern Ukraine.

We call upon the Russian Federation not to interfere. It is our task to fight terrorists on our soil. We are responsible for that task; we are responsible to our own people. As many speakers, including the representative of the Russian Federation, have said, double standards in combating terrorism are unacceptable. I would therefore call on him to prove to everyone that Russia's words are consistent with its actions.

Mr. Lustig (Israel): For the past 24 hours a search has been under way for three Israeli teenagers who are believed to have been taken hostage in an act of terrorism. The thoughts of the people of Israel are with the boys and their families, and we pray that they will return home safely. Israel holds the Palestinian Authority responsible for the well-being of the missing boys.

As the ongoing victim of terrorist attacks, Israel cannot sit silently by and listen to other countries make baseless accusations even as they themselves harbour and sponsor terrorist groups. In particular, it took a great deal of audacity on the part of the Lebanese delegation to demonize my country given the countless human rights abuses taking place in Lebanon. Added to that audacity is the fact that the newly established Lebanese Government includes representatives of an internationally designed terrorist organization, Hizbullah.

Before speaking against Israel in this Hall, I suggest that the Lebanese delegation take a look at the refugee camps throughout Lebanon, such as Ein el-Hilweh and Nahr al-Bared, where Palestinians are kept in some of the worst conditions in the region and are deprived of their rights. They are subject to violence, discrimination and economic and social oppression. Before its representative chooses to launch an attack against Israel, I advise the Lebanese Government first to address all the attacks launched by Hizbullah on innocent civilians in Syria.

Mr. Zmeevsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We naturally fully repudiate the words and imaginative accusations flung against the Russian Federation. We would only like to exhort the representative of Ukraine not to mask the criminality of actions being taken against his own people by labeling them "combating terrorism". Sooner or later he will have to face judgement for that, be it through the courts, before the international community and or when answering for his own honour.

Mr. Kasap (Ukraine): I thank my colleague from the Russian delegation for his clear message. I just want to say that we stand ready to answer for everything that we are doing. It is difficult to commend the words of my colleagues in the delegation of the Russian Federation. It is always difficult to have a dialogue when your opponent does not hear you and does not want to hear you. I have nothing to add but once again urge the Russian Federation to leave us alone and let us deal with our future in peace.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 119?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations A/68/PV.98

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

98th plenary meeting
Monday, 16 June 2014, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 53 (*continued*)

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/68/426/Add.1)

The President: I request the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Michal Komada of Slovakia, to introduce the report of the Committee.

Mr. Komada (Slovakia), Rapporteur of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee): I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) submitted under agenda item 53, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects", as contained in document A/68/426/Add.1. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations held its substantive session between 24 February and 21 March, when it reviewed its work and considered new proposals.

By adopting the draft resolution contained in paragraph 6 of the report, and entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all aspects", the General Assembly would endorse the proposals and recommendations contained in paragraph 17 to 315 of the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations issued in document A/68/19. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of this draft resolution.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) that is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, unless notified to otherwise in advance.

The General Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution. The Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/277).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

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Agenda item 63 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/68/L.43/Rev.1)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly considered, in a joint debate, agenda item 63 and its sub-items (a) and (b) and agenda item 13, at its 36th and 37th plenary meetings, on 25 October 2013.

I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda to introduce draft resolution A/68/L.43/Rev.1.

Mrs. Ssempa (Uganda): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the draft resolution contained in document A/68/L.43/Rev.1, under agenda item 63 (b), entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

The Group conveys its appreciation to all delegations for their constructive contributions to the draft resolution. We also thank all the Member States that have co-sponsored the draft resolution.

The draft resolution stresses, inter alia, that the responsibility for peace and security in Africa, including the capacity to address the root causes of conflict and to resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner, lies primarily with African countries, while recognizing the need for the provision of support by the international community and the United Nations, taking into account the responsibilities of the Organization in that regard, according to the Charter of the United Nations.

We welcome the progress made by African countries, the African Union and subregional organizations in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development. We call for intensified efforts and a coordinated approach among national Governments, the African Union, subregional organizations, the United Nations system and partners in addressing those challenges, with a view to achieving further progress towards the goal of a conflict-free Africa.

The draft resolution recognizes that international and regional efforts to prevent conflict and consolidate peace in Africa should be channelled towards the sustainable development of Africa and the human and institutional capacity-building of African countries and organizations, particularly in the priority areas identified at the continental level. In that regard, we welcome the joint visit of the Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank to the countries of the Great Lakes region of Africa from 22 to 25 May 2013 and the financial pledge announced by the World Bank during that visit in support of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region.

We also welcome the joint visit of the Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the President of the World Bank, the President of the African Development Bank and the European Union Commissioner for Development to the Sahel region from 4 to 7 November 2013, during which financial pledges were made to support the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. We call for the fulfilment of the pledges made during both visits.

The achievement of durable peace and sustainable development in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, in particular, requires national Governments and international partners to continue to develop coordinated approaches tailored to the peacebuilding needs and challenges faced by those countries. The draft resolution also urges continued support for measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication, hunger, job creation and sustainable development in Africa, including, as appropriate, debt relief, improved market access, support for the private sector and entrepreneurship, fulfilment of commitments on official development assistance and increased flows of foreign direct investment and transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms.

We recognize the need for African countries to make continued efforts to create enabling environments for inclusive growth in support of sustainable development and for the international community to make ongoing efforts to increase the flow of new and additional resources for financing for development from all sources, public, private, domestic and foreign. We welcome the various important initiatives established between African countries and their development partners.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to the draft resolution being adopted by consensus.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/68/L.43/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those representatives listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/68/L.43/Rev.1: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/68/L.43/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/68/L.43/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 68/278).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 63?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 116 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(i) Approval of the appointment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Note by the Secretary-General (A/68/904)

The President: By its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, the General Assembly decided to create the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In paragraph 2 of his note, the Secretary-General, pursuant to the provisions of resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, proposes to appoint Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a term of office of four years, beginning on 1 September 2014 and ending on 31 August 2018.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to approve the proposal of the Secretary-General to appoint Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a term of office of four years, beginning on 1 September 2014 and ending on 31 August 2018?

It was so decided.

Ms. Kamara (Liberia): On behalf of the African Group, I warmly welcome the appointment of Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a term of four years, commencing on 1 September 2014. We sincerely congratulate the Prince on that great achievement.

Similarly, the African Group commends Ms. Pillay for the great contribution that she has made to the pursuit, protection and promotion of human rights in the past six years. Through her efforts, the protection of human rights received renewed impetus over the years.

The African Group wishes to underscore the importance of human rights in the political, social and cultural life of every person. Societies will scarcely thrive and prosper where human rights are unprotected and their enjoyment capricious. That is precisely why Africa has made concerted efforts over the years and encouraged the protection and promotion of human rights for all at both the national and the international levels.

The African Group is cognizant of the vast experience that Prince Zeid brings to the portfolio. His outstanding achievements in the service of his country, the United Nations and other international bodies, as well as his contribution to the pursuit of justice for victims of human rights violations, make him eminently suitable to effectively execute his responsibilities as the chief global advocate for the protection and promotion of human rights. I wish to assure Prince Zeid of Africa's cooperation in his new assignment and of our expectation that he will give priority to the strengthening of national capacities to respect and protect human rights.

On behalf of the African Group and in my national capacity, I again congratulate the Prince and wish him success in this new professional endeavour.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): On behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States, I am honoured to welcome the Secretary-General's nomination of His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan as the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

We believe that Prince Zeid will fulfil his responsibilities as High Commissioner with the extraordinary skill, profound integrity and sound judgement he has displayed during his tenure as the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations. Given the complex issues related to human rights that confront us today, the international community will greatly benefit from his leadership, sense of justice, deep knowledge of issues of international justice and experience in the multilateral arena. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is a critical part of the United Nations system and is mandated to uphold commitments to universal ideals of human dignity. In that light, we look forward to working with Prince Zeid in the future, and we offer our Group's full support to the Office of the High Commissioner.

We would also like to express our appreciation to Ms. Navanethem Pillay for her contributions during her tenure as High Commissioner for Human Rights. On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, we would like to offer her our best wishes for her future endeavours.

Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC) in expressing our sincere congratulations to His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein on his appointment as the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The members of GRULAC consider the protection and promotion of universal human rights to be extremely important, and recognize the central role of the United Nations in achieving international cooperation in this area. Promoting and protecting all human rights universally is one of the fundamental pillars of the Organization's work. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is a key player in the work of fulfilling the mandates agreed on by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, a task in which we are certain His Royal Highness will play a major part.

The countries of our region have been actively involved in negotiations, discussions and decision-making on the issue of the enjoyment of all human rights for all peoples and individuals. In our area, we promote the right to peace, development and the self-determination of peoples, the rights of migrants and indigenous peoples, and the right to gender equality. We fight against any kind of discrimination. We would like to assure Prince Zeid that he can count on the full cooperation of every member of GRULAC.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): Today I have the real honour of addressing the General Assembly on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States. On behalf of the Group, I would like to offer our warm congratulations to His Royal Highness Prince Zeid on his appointment to this important office.

The promotion and protection of human rights are a core part of the role of the Organization and one of its founding principles, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations. We are therefore pleased that its work on human rights will be led by somebody with the level of commitment, passion and experience of Prince Zeid. He brings to the role an in-depth knowledge of the United Nations system, experience working in the field and a commitment to gender equality and criminal justice. We look forward to working with him and assure him of our full support.

We would also like to express our Group's great appreciation for the work of Ms. Navanethem Pillay and her tireless efforts over the past six years to highlight injustices and provide a voice for the vulnerable. On behalf of the Western European and Other States Group, I wish both the current and future High Commissioners success in working to realize the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for everyone around the world.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (European Union): The European Union welcomes the approval of the appointment by the General Assembly of His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan as the next United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, following the Secretary-General's nomination. We are convinced that Prince Zeid's proven track record in the promotion and protection of human rights and

the fight against impunity, as well as his exceptional diplomatic experience, will be an invaluable asset to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It is therefore with the greatest respect and support that we acknowledge the appointment of Prince Zeid as the new High Commissioner.

The European Union is a strong supporter of the Office of the High Commissioner and its independence and integrity, as well as of the Human Rights Council. We look forward to open and constructive cooperation with Prince Zeid and his Office in pursuing our common goal of advancing the universality and indivisibility of all human rights all over the world, and in making the principles enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights a reality.

The European Union would also like to pay a warm tribute to the outstanding work done by Ms. Navanethem Pillay as High Commissioner for Human Rights. Ms. Pillay's personal commitment and strong leadership have made an invaluable contribution to consolidating the Office of the High Commissioner as an independent body defending and upholding human rights across the globe, for all people and without discrimination or distinction of any kind or for any reason.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): While associating myself with the statement delivered by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, in my capacity as representative of the host country of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, I would like to offer my hearty congratulations to Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein on his appointment as High Commissioner for Human Rights. Switzerland will be very happy to welcome Prince Zeid and his delightful family to Geneva, and I wish him every success, as well as courage and determination, in his important task of protecting and promoting human rights.

On a lighter note, I know that Prince Zeid is a big fan of Swiss cheese fondue, and that he will be starting the job in the autumn, which is the best season for cheese and fondue.

At the same time, and perhaps rather more seriously, I would also like to sincerely thank Ms. Navanethem Pillay for her untiring and exemplary commitment to human rights and the victims of violations of human rights. In my view, she has defended human rights as a South African lion defends its cubs.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan): For a second, when you announced the nomination, Mr. President, and no one clapped, I thought I was off the hook. My supportive wife, who is seated behind me, told me to enjoy this moment and to soak it all up. "After all", she said, "you are among friends whom you have known for a very long time. But when you start this job", she added, "you may not have them for very long". The confidence our spouses have in us is limitless, and so human rights must surely begin in the family home.

With your permission, Sir, I will say a few words in Arabic.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

At the outset, I would like to thank all the members of the General Assembly, the heads of the regional groups and His Excellency the Secretary-General. I thank them all for all the support and trust they have shown this afternoon. I highly appreciate the confidence they are placing in me by appointing me to this position, especially as I am the first High Commissioner from the Asian continent and from the Muslim and Arab worlds. Needless to say, this reflects the commitment of the international community to this important dossier and to advancing it on that continent and other regions of the world, taking into account the independence and mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner, as established by resolution 48/141 in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, subsequent conventions, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1).

It is in that framework that I have the honour this month to join the highly qualified staff of the Office of the High Commissioner, who have been carrying out such good work wherever they are, whether in the field, in Geneva under the supervision of Assistant Secretary-General Ms. Flavia Pansieri, or in New York under the supervision of Assistant Secretary-General Ivan Šimonović.

The human rights dossier is replete with responsibilities and crucial challenges. Dealing with it requires wisdom and a high level of coordination and communication with the different Governments, civil society and all the United Nations agencies.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Ms. Navi Pillay for her courageous endeavours. I

am honoured to be her successor and to build on her noteworthy achievements.

To conclude, I would like to address my special thanks to His Highness King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, who has been supporting me throughout the years I have spent in his service and the service of the Government and people of Jordan in this international arena.

The President: I thank the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights elect for his statement. I would let him know that he is back on the hook.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 116 and agenda item 116 as a whole?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.

United Nations A/68/PV.99

General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

99th plenary meeting
Monday, 30 June 2014, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 10 (*continued*)

Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS

Draft decision (A/68/L.51)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held a debate on agenda item 11 at its 91st and 92nd plenary meetings, on 6 June.

We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/68/L.51, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft decision A/68/L.51, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS", I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraph (b) of the draft decision, the General Assembly would decide to convene a high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS in 2016, preferably in the second half of the year, and to undertake the necessary consultations to determine the modalities and organizational arrangements for such a meeting during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, but no later than December 2015.

Pursuant to the request contained in operative paragraph (b), the General Assembly would convene a high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS in 2016. It is understood that all issues related to the meeting, including the date, format, organization and scope, would be determined during the seventieth session of the General Assembly. Accordingly, in the absence of the modalities for the meeting, it is not possible at the present time to estimate the potential cost implications of the requirements for meetings and documentation. Upon the decision on the modalities, format and organization of the meeting, the Secretary-General would submit the relevant costs of such requirements, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Accordingly, the adoption of draft decision A/68/L.51 would not give rise to any financial implications under the programme budget.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/68/L.51, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS".

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506. Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision A/68/L.51?

Draft decision A/68/L.51 was adopted (decision 68/555).

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the decision just adopted.

Ms. Derderian (United States of America): The United States joins the consensus on the decision just adopted. We are pleased to welcome the report of the Secretary-General, entitled "Towards ending the AIDS epidemic: meeting the 2015 targets and planning for the post-2015 era" (A/68/825). We also wish to acknowledge the progress achieved and the remaining challenges in the fight against HIV and AIDS, as noted in the report.

We look forward to the high-level meeting on HIV and AIDS in 2016 and to actively engaging in consultations on the arrangements to ensure a successful meeting.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 10.

Agenda item 18 (*continued*)

Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference

Draft resolution (A/68/L.49)

The Acting President: I would like to inform members that the consideration of draft resolution A/68/L.49, entitled "Modalities for the third International Conference on Financing for Development", will take place following the adoption of its programme budget implications by the Fifth Committee, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure.

The meeting was suspended at 3.25 p.m. on Monday, 30 June, and resumed at 3.45 p.m. on Thursday, 3 July.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by the Secretary-General (A/68/235)

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take up a request submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/68/235 relating to the appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee.

In his note, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly of the resignation of Gerhard Küntzle (Germany) from membership of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee, effective 16 June 2014. A vacancy in the Committee has therefore occurred as of that date.

As the agenda of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly does not contain a sub-item on the appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee, the Secretary-General has therefore deemed it necessary to request, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional sub-item entitled "Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee", under agenda item 116, entitled "Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments".

Owing to the nature of the sub-item, unless there is an objection, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees to waive the relevant provision of rule 40 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, which would require a meeting of the General Committee on the question of the inclusion of this additional sub-item in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly, on the proposal of the Secretary-General, wishes to include in the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 116, entitled "Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments", an additional sub-item entitled "Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee", under heading I, "Organizational, administrative and other matters"?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Owing to the nature of the item, the Secretary-General also requests that it be allocated to the Fifth Committee.

As the Fifth Committee has just concluded its work for the resumed part of the session, and without setting a precedent, may I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to consider this sub-item directly in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly? I know it has been a hard time for the members of the Fifth Committee, and the request is that this item be considered directly by this session of the General Assembly without asking the Fifth Committee to meet on this item.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I should like to inform members that this additional sub-item becomes sub-item (j) of agenda item 116 in the agenda of the current session.

Agenda item 18 (*continued*)

Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference

Draft resolution (A/68/L.49)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/917)

The Acting President: Members will recall that, under agenda item 118, the Assembly held the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development at its 29th and 30th plenary meetings, on 7 October 2013, and its 31st plenary meeting, on 8 October 2013.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/68/L.49, entitled "Modalities for the third International Conference on Financing for Development". We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/68/L.49. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/68/L.49?

Draft resolution A/68/L.49 was adopted (resolution 68/279).

The Acting President: I should now like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador George Wilfred Talbot of Guyana and Ambassador Geir Pedersen of Norway, who so ably and patiently conducted the deliberations and complex negotiations in the informal consultations. I also thank Member States for their very valuable contributions to the successful completion of resolution 68/279. I am sure that the members of the Assembly join me in extending our sincere appreciation to the Ambassadors for their hard work and leadership.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 18.

Agenda item 67 (*continued*)

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

(b) Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Draft decision (A/68/L.52)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly decided to consider sub-item (b) of agenda item 67 directly in plenary meeting and adopted resolution 68/237, entitled "Proclamation of the International Decade for People of African Descent", at its 72nd plenary meeting, on 23 December 2013.

We will now proceed to take action on draft decision A/68/L.52, entitled "Extension of the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on a programme for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent". May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/68/L.52?

Draft decision A/68/L.52 was adopted (decision 68/556).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 67.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 131, 134, 147, 148, 150 to 152, 154 to 158, 159 (a) and (b), 160 to 165, 176 and 132.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Ken Siah of Singapore, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Fifth Committee before the Assembly.

Mr. Siah (Singapore), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee containing recommendations on issues that required action during

the second part of the resumed sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

On agenda item 131, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", in its report contained in document A/68/610/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

On agenda item 134, entitled "Programme Budget for the biennium 2014-2015", in its reports contained in documents A/68/689/Add.2 and A/68/917, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution and a statement of programme budget implications, both of which the Committee adopted without a vote.

On agenda item 147, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", in its report contained in document A/68/918, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following four draft resolutions, all of which the Committee adopted without a vote: draft resolution I, entitled "Rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries" ; draft resolution II, entitled: "Triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment"; draft resolution III, entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations"; and draft resolution IV, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy".

With regard to the draft resolutions on the financing of peacekeeping operations, I should like to inform the General Assembly that, with the exception of sub-item (b) of agenda item 159, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", the Committee adopted all the draft resolutions without a vote.

The reports of the Fifth Committee are presented under the following agenda items: 148, "Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei", contained in document A/68/672/Add.1; 150, "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire", contained in document A/68/922; 151, "Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus", contained in document A/68/923; 152, "Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo", contained in document A/68/924; 154, "Financing of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste", contained in document A/68/919; 155, "Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti", contained in document A/68/925; 156, "Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo", contained in document A/68/926; 157, "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia", contained in document A/68/927; 158, "Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali", contained in document A/68/680/Add.1; sub-item (a) of agenda item 159, "Financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force", contained in document A/68/671/Add.1; 160, "Financing of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan", contained in document A/68/929; 161, "Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan", contained in document A/68/920; 162, "Financing of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic", contained in document A/68/921; 163, "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara", contained in document A/68/930; 164, "Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur", contained in document A/68/931; 165, "Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009)", contained in document A/68/933; and 176, "Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic", contained in document A/68/932.

Regarding sub-item (b) of agenda item 159, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/68/928. The Committee considered the draft resolution and decided to retain the fourth preambular paragraph and existing operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 13 by a single recorded vote. The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by the Committee by a recorded vote. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution.

Finally, under agenda item 132, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", in its report A/68/691/Add.2, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft decision relating to questions deferred for future consideration. The proposal was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In conclusion, I would like to thank delegations for their cooperation during the negotiations. I would also like to thank the Chair of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Janne Taalas, for his guidance through our

work, as well as the other members of the Bureau of the sixty-eighth session.

The Acting President: I thank the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee for his introduction.

Before proceeding, I would like to emphasize to representatives that, as the Fifth Committee has just finished its work, the reports are available in English only. It is my understanding that they will be issued in other languages as soon as possible. I apologize for that and thank representatives for their understanding.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the official records.

May I also remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

Agenda item 131 (*continued*)

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/610/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.43. We shall now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/19 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 131.

Agenda item 134 (*continued*)

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/689/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.42, as orally revised in the Committee.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/280).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 147

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/918)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 12 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261 on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries", the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.44, as orally revised in the Committee. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 68/281).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment". For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.45. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 68/282).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations", the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.46. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 68/283).

The Acting President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy". For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.47. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 68/284).

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position following the adoption of the resolutions.

Mr. Mukerji (India): As one of the largest troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, India underscores the importance of resolution 68/281, which the General Assembly has just adopted. This is the first time in almost 20 years that the General Assembly has revised the basic troop reimbursement rate upwards.

We joined the compromise consensus because of our demonstrated commitment to multilateralism. It is our belief that jeopardizing reimbursements to troops on the ground wearing blue helmets would be detrimental both to the institution and to the credibility of the United Nations, as well as to troops' ability to effectively fulfil the mandate for which they have been deployed.

We thank most sincerely the Permanent Representative of Bolivia, who, as Chair of the Group of 77, contributed in no small measure to the outcome. We also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for having taken the initiative to bridge the difference between the finance-contributing and troop-contributing countries, which, together, make up the organic whole of United Nations peacekeeping. On this occasion, we would like to state the following.

First, the outcome of the negotiations, which were long and arduous, spread out over the past two months, is firmly rooted in the acceptance by all members of the Assembly of the process of the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and related issues (A/C.5/67/10, annex) and its survey (see A/68/813). India was a member of the Senior Advisory Group and is well aware of the compromises that were made for the report. The fact that the report submitted to the Secretary-General, and subsequently scrutinized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, almost foundered on the rocks and shoals of the Fifth Committee gives us cause for concern. The manner in which the negotiations were conducted in the Fifth Committee, seeking to reopen the Senior Advisory Group's report and survey, is reprehensible.

We assert today that, with the adoption of the resolution, all States Members of the United Nations have committed themselves unequivocally to the future method by which the reimbursement for troop costs

for United Nations peacekeeping operations will be handled from now on. That essentially means that the report of the Senior Advisory Group and the resolution put in place an automatic and objective methodology for dealing with the reimbursement of troop costs for United Nations peacekeeping operations in future. Four years later, our successors in the Assembly should, we hope, adopt a follow-up draft resolution without the rancour and bitterness that marked our engagement this time.

Secondly, the survey mandated by the General Assembly as part of the Senior Advisory Group's report is the accepted objective method for assessing troop-reimbursement costs. India is one of the 10 countries that participated in facilitating the work of the survey. The average figure given by the survey, proposing a reimbursement of $1,762 per month for individual troops in a United Nations peacekeeping operation, is based on the facts on the ground. That such facts have been questioned and finessed by references to the current economic and financial difficulties faced by finance-contributing countries does not, in our view, lessen the justification for the figure of $1,762 per month. We therefore expect the next survey, due four years from now, to use the figure of $1,762 per month as the baseline for its examination of the ground realities in relation to the escalating costs of United Nations peacekeeping.

Thirdly, we refer to the overriding argument of economic difficulties in appropriating budgets for contributing to United Nations peacekeeping made in our negotiations this year. As has been noted, it has taken 18 long years for the previous baseline figure of $1,028 per peacekeeper per month to be revised upwards today. During that period, many of us, including troop-contributing countries, faced similar economic difficulties and budget austerity measures. However, those difficulties did not prevent us, as troop-contributing countries, from demonstrating our commitment to the cause of maintaining international peace and security by contributing our troops when called for by the United Nations. We hope that the next four years will see a significant upturn in the economic fortunes of our partners in the finance-contributing countries. However, we would caution against using that argument four years later to again attempt to negate the outcome of the objective process embodied by the survey mandated by the General Assembly.

Fourthly, we would like to express our concern about the increasing demands being placed on the human and financial resources of participating Member States by the mushrooming of United Nations peacekeeping operations. That such peacekeeping operations are being mandated by the Security Council as a knee-jerk response to volatile political situations within Member States is something that we have addressed at length in open debates of the Security Council. It is now for the General Assembly to advise the Security Council, in the light of the financial difficulties that major members of the Council face in contributing resources for an ever-expanding footprint of peacekeeping operations, to review its approach. The Security Council should only, to use an idiom from shopkeeping, "cut its coat to suit its cloth".

Finally, we reiterate our offer, as a major troop-contributing country, to share our experience and advice with the Security Council on how to make the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations more cost-effective. We can, however, do so only if the Security Council begins to implement the provisions of Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides for us to play such a role. We hope that members of the Security Council, especially the major finance-contributing Member States, will take advantage of our suggestion so that we can share the burden in a meaningful way to make the United Nations more credible and effective.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): We commend the efforts of Mr. Janne Taalas for having ably steered this extremely challenging session of the Fifth Committee. We thank him for his leadership.

My delegation recognizes the sterling leadership, wisdom and negotiating skills of Ambassador Sacha Llorentty Soliz, Chair of the Group of 77 and China. We also thank partners for engaging the Group of 77 and stepping forward to increase the reimbursement rates despite their financial constraints. We can all celebrate the fact that, despite their different perspectives, all sides worked resolutely to explore common ground and to keep the peacekeeping partnership intact and strong. What ultimately matters is that the spirit and tradition of consensus prevailed.

The Fifth Committee experts deserve tribute for their professionalism, hard work and tenacity of purpose. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his intercession and outreach and we thank Ms. Susana

Malcorra for going the extra mile to forge consensus and for averting a drift towards an ad hoc solution, which the entire membership did not want.

In view of the increasing complexity and demands of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Group of 77 and China has long argued for an increase in the reimbursement rate for costs incurred by troop- and police-contributing countries in deploying their forces to United Nations peacekeeping missions. The reimbursement rate was last revised in 1992. Since then, it has remained a vexing issue for the General Assembly and for the United Nations. The rate has now been revised. That is a step in the right direction.

Our partners, the major fund contributors, have always — I would add, rightly — insisted that any fruitful conversation on the rate increase could take place only if there were empirical evidence to justify such an increase in the reimbursement rates. We needed data for the required empirical evidence and to determine the common denominator for an increase in such rates.

The Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and related issues, established in 2011, gave us the necessary framework and a common denominator. The report of the Senior Advisory Group (A/C.5/67/10, annex) made three key recommendations, namely, that, first, the typical rotation period be set at 12 months; secondly, a proportional reduction be made to personnel reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (TCCs) or police-contributing countries in the case of absent or non-functional major equipment; and, thirdly, to provide fair and equitable compensation to TCCs, a survey be conducted so that a decision could be made on a factual basis, grounded in the reality of the actual costs incurred. Last year, we approved the Senior Advisory Group's report. It was a difficult decision for us. We assumed costly obligations.

Pursuant to the third recommendation, a professional survey was conducted on the basis of a scientific methodology. The survey report clearly recognizes $1,762.55 per contingent person per month as the actual weighted average cost to TCCs. The figure is authentic and credible. It should remain an indicative parameter for the next four years. We are glad that resolution 68/281, adopted today, welcomes the Secretary-General's report on the results of the revised survey (A/68/813).

We express satisfaction that the reimbursement rates have been revised and increased formally for the first time since 1992. We have broken new ground despite the divergences and constraints. Despite the limitations of the outcome, our decision today is a net gain for peacekeeping and for the Organization. However, we must continue to review reimbursement rates periodically so as to align them with the actual costs incurred, both tangible and intangible. That, we hope, will be done four years from now.

Finally, Pakistan reiterates its strong commitment to United Nations peacekeeping. International peacekeeping under the auspices of the United Nations is a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 147.

Agenda item 148 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/672/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.48.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/258 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 148.

Agenda item 150

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/922)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.49.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/285).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 150.

Agenda item 151

Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/923)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.50.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/286).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 151.

Agenda item 152

Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/924)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.51.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/287).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 152.

Agenda item 154

Financing of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/919)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.38.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/288).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 154.

Agenda item 155

Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/925)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.52.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/289).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 155.

Agenda item 156

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/926)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.53.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/290).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 156.

Agenda item 157

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/927)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.54.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/291).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 157.

Agenda item 158 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/680/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.55.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/259 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 158.

Agenda item 159 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/671/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.56.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/260 B).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position.

Mr. Ayzouki (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation joined the consensus on the adoption of resolution 68/260 B, on the financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and we also support the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (A/C.5/68/L.39). Our position is based on our consistent support for the principle that the responsibility for financing those two forces should be borne by Israel, the aggressor and occupying Power responsible for their establishment in the first place. Our position is in conformity with the basic principles set out in resolution 1874 (S-IV), of 27 June 1963.

We would like to underscore that the reports of the Secretariat should be impartial and unpoliticized. The reports of the Secretary-General (A/68/596 and A/68/725) on the budget for UNDOF do not mention the role of Israel's military activities in supporting terrorist groups associated with Al-Qaida that have crossed into the area of separation. The reports described the Syrian crisis as a civilian crisis, although it is a war against terrorism.

We are surprised that the reports state that the Damascus airport is closed. It was never closed. It is still operating in the usual, orderly way. We would ask that the Force again use the Damascus airport and other Syrian airports to support the needs of the mission, as the roads in the mission's area of operations are safe. Moreover, the withdrawal of UNDOF from certain areas has opened the door for terrorist groups that are attacking Syrian forces with the support of the Israeli occupation forces. UNDOF should immediatcly take back its territory, as Syria has provided the infrastructure enabling it to return to the field, for that is important for stability in the area of separation.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 159.

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/928)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.39.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon".

I shall now put to the vote the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 13, on which a single separate and recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 13 were retained by 87 votes to 3, with 50 abstentions.

The Acting President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole, as amended. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire,

Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:
Canada, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:
Zambia

The draft resolution, as a whole, was adopted by 138 votes to 3, with 1 abstention (resolution 68/292).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Saudi Arabia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 159.

Agenda item 160

Financing of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/929)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.57, as orally revised in the Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/929).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 160.

Agenda item 161

Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/920)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.40.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/294).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 161.

Agenda item 162

Financing of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/921)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.37.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/295).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 162.

Agenda item 163

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/930)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.58.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/296).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 163.

Agenda item 164

Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/931)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.59, as orally revised in the Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 68/297).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 164.

Agenda item 165

Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/933)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.60.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/298).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 165.

Agenda item 176

Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/932)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.61.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 68/299).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 176.

Agenda item 132 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/691/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft decision is contained in document A/C.5/68/L.62.

The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision, entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 68/549 C).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 132.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Janne Taalas, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations and Chairperson of the Fifth Committee, the members of the Bureau and representatives for a job well done. It has been an extremely taxing exercise, and they have all done an excellent job.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.

United Nations A/68/PV.100

General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

100th plenary meeting
Thursday, 10 July 2014, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 118 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

High-level meeting of the General Assembly on the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

Draft resolution A/68/L.53

The President: I warmly welcome the General Assembly to this High-level Meeting, whose overarching theme is "Taking stock of progress in implementing the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases and scaling up multi-stakeholder and national multisectoral responses to the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, including in the context of the post-2015 development agenda".

Permit me to make a statement.

I am pleased to welcome the General Assembly to this High-level Meeting on the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). This review takes place against the stark backdrop of the recognition that NCDs are now recognized by the World Health Organization as the largest single cause of death and disability worldwide, responsible for some 36 million deaths, or 63 per cent of a total 57 million deaths that took place in 2008. Furthermore, by 2020, the number of NCD-induced deaths is expected to grow to 44 million per annum. Simply put, NCDs are key determinants of human health and thus represent a significant threat to human well-being and our sustainable development.

Over the next two days, the General Assembly will be turning its attention to this major development challenge of the twenty-first century. At the same time, we begin this meeting optimistically, buoyed by the success of the informal interactive hearing with non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia that took place exactly three weeks ago today. Similarly, today's broad participation and interest in the topic bodes very well for the prospects of preventing and controlling NCDs.

We are three years into the implementation of the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs (resolution 66/2, annex). In that time, much has been achieved at the international level. Specifically, I refer to four positive developments, namely, the endorsement by the World Health Assembly, in May 2013, of the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020; the adoption of a comprehensive global monitoring framework, which includes 25 indicators for NCDs and nine voluntary global targets to be achieved by 2025; the establishment, in July 2013, of the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs; and the establishment of a global coordination mechanism for the prevention and control of NCDs. I commend the World Health Organization

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for completing those important global assignments as mandated in the Political Declaration.

Yet, regrettably, and despite the increase in national multisectoral plans and NCD units in many developing countries, a significant number of those countries are struggling to move from commitment to action. It must be conceded, however, that this is not the result of a lack of political will; but rather of the fact that many developing countries have neither the technical nor the financial resources to undertake the effective multisectoral action and responses needed to address the significant health and socioeconomic impacts of NCDs. That lack of resources and uneven progress are dismaying in the light of the many burdens that NCDs place on individuals, families, communities and countries, especially in the developing world, where some 80 per cent of global deaths from NCDs occur. The increasing incidence and impact of NCDs are of particular concern as we seek to reorder the global sustainable development agenda and prioritize the issues that most constrain development within the post-2015 development agenda.

It should also be noted that every year more than 14 million people between the ages of 30 and 70 die prematurely from NCDs in developing countries. In fact, despite rising life expectancy globally, a quarter of the deaths from NCDs take place among people under 60 years of age. The reality we face, and the one we must address, is that developing countries have the greatest vulnerability and the least resilience in preventing and controlling NCDs.

The rapid increase in aspects of unhealthy lifestyles such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol are affecting the poorest people in the poorest countries. The health and economic burdens of NCDs have severely undermined development gains in many developing nations, particularly low- and middle-income countries. The high incidence of NCDs and the resulting morbidity and mortality in the Pacific and Caribbean regions is very troubling, since as many as 25 per cent of the populations of both regions suffer from one or more NCD. It should also be remembered that the populations of the countries of those regions are very small, and those in their most productive years, who should be making the greatest contribution to national development, are the very ones now being struck down by these diseases. As we continue efforts to build a healthier and more sustainable world, we must remain aware of and address the very real risk that NCDs pose to sustainable human development.

Our efforts must also include children and adolescents, as well as people over the age of 70, who are affected by NCDs in various ways. The World Health Organization reports that in 2010 the number of overweight children under the age of 5 was estimated to be more than 42 million, with close to 35 million living in developing countries. The tragedy of the high incidence of NCDs is not only the levels of morbidity and mortality they cause but also the fact that they can often be prevented. That raises one of the issues that has not been fully addressed in the debates on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and post-2015 development — that of lifestyle and sustainable consumption and production, which must be part of any discussion and approach in reversing the incidence and impact of NCDs.

In 2011, Heads of State and Government undertook a tremendous historical commitment in global health and development by raising awareness of the growing incidence of NCDs. Yet as we wait for the seeds of that commitment to bear fruit, the burden of disease has grown in a world already struggling with new and emerging challenges. I therefore urge the General Assembly to join me in expressing the sense of urgency that is now required in order to scale up and transform those commitments into action, particularly at the national level, where the fight against NCDs must be won.

As I noted in my statement at the informal interactive hearing on NCDs three weeks ago, it takes a village to prevent and control NCDs. A broader commitment and engagement on the part of all the relevant stakeholders is key; however, it is critical that sustainable financing and technical support be provided in order to build and strengthen the capacity of health systems and interventions, improve data collection in countries that lack such capacity and build knowledge and awareness programmes and strong primary health-care systems that emphasize prevention. During the informal interactive hearing, we learned that, while there is currently approximately $31 billion in development assistance dedicated to health, only $377 million of that entire sum is directed towards NCDs. While we can explore partnerships and cooperative relationships such as North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, we must also integrate NCDs into bilateral and international development cooperation, national

development agendas and prevention strategies. I am pleased to note that tomorrow's round-table discussion will address the issue of partnerships in cooperation and multisectoral responses.

Good human health is simultaneously a contributor to and an outcome of human development and a reduction in global deaths and disability from NCDs. It is pivotal to good human development. Over the next two days, I will ask the Assembly to help set this meeting apart as an event that can put the world on a path to achieving communities free of the avoidable burden of NCDs. Let it be the beginning of a more robust and effective implementation of the Political Declaration, in concert with the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020, and let it lead to better partnerships and cooperation and more effective multisectoral approaches and responses. This meeting, and the policies and actions that will emanate from it, can and must be used to set the global family on a more healthy, development-oriented trajectory. Let us embrace and give effect to that objective.

I now give the floor to Ms. Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General and Chef de Cabinet, to make a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Ms. Malcorra: I have the honour to represent the Secretary-General and to convey this message on his behalf. The Secretary-General had a last-minute scheduling conflict due to an ongoing crisis, and has asked me to represent him.

> "I am pleased to send greetings to this important gathering. The global epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is a major and growing challenge to development. Each year, in developing countries alone, strokes, heart attacks, cancer, diabetes and asthma kill more than 12 million people between the ages of 30 and 70. It is possible to prevent most of those deaths. We need a set of simple, effective and affordable solutions for all Member States that can be tailored to each country's needs. The draft outcome document before the Assembly (A/68/L.53) helps chart the way forward.
>
> "Three years ago, we agreed that it was time to act. We asked Governments to protect their citizens from NCD risk factors, provide responsive health systems and track the trends of this epidemic. We also called on civil society and the private sector to help us implement new policies so that the scale of the problem would not prevent us from achieving the Millennium Development Goals. As a result, more Governments are now providing institutional, legal, financial and service arrangements aimed at preventing and controlling NCDs.
>
> "Last year, I established the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, with the World Health Organization (WHO) in the lead. It assists countries to implement the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020, which seeks a 25 per cent reduction in premature mortality from NCDs by 2025. Improved global monitoring and improved coordination will provide the foundation for advocacy, policy development and global action. This High-level Meeting can help to frame the concrete actions that countries should take between now and the third high-level meeting on NCDs in 2018. Success will depend on finding new ways to strengthen the ability of countries to adopt bolder measures.
>
> "The World Health Organization has a special role to play. It has a proven ability to influence policy and build capacity and a long-standing role as a trusted partner working across sectors. The WHO will continue to lead. However, the rapidly growing demand for technical assistance means that the United Nations system as a whole must incorporate NCDs as a priority and must develop innovative partnerships. We need strong leadership and action by other sectors, including non-State sectors. We need to improve access to affordable medicines for NCDs. We must find new ways of encouraging the private sector to stop marketing unhealthy foods to children and to produce more foods that are low in fat, sugar and salt.
>
> "The actions identified in the draft outcome document can help to remove the barriers to good health that blight the lives of too many people. Let us leave this meeting energized, inspired and committed to the cause that we have embarked upon. I wish the Assembly a productive and successful engagement."

The President: I thank the Chef de Cabinet for her statement, delivered on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 68/271, I now give the floor to Ms. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization.

Ms. Chan (World Health Organization): I would like to start by thanking the President and the Secretary-General for their insightful and comprehensive statements.

The 2011 Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (resolution 66/2, annex) was a watershed event. Heads of State and Government formally recognized such diseases as a major threat to health, economies and societies and placed them high on the development agenda. The projected trends provoked deep concern, especially as poor populations, which are the least able to cope, are being hit the hardest. Bold commitments were made to act on multiple fronts. Prevention was put forward as the cornerstone of the global response.

The Secretary-General transmitted my progress report to the General Assembly last December (see A/68/650). We are here to take stock of that progress and to generate consensus on the next steps and the priority actions needed to expedite progress. The Political Declaration gave the World Health Organization (WHO) a leadership role, together with several time-bound assignments. Those assignments, which have been completed, established global mechanisms and a road map for coordinated multisectoral action and the monitoring of results.

Progress within countries matters most. Some striking achievements emerge from a survey conducted by the WHO last year. Of the 172 countries reporting data, 95 per cent have a unit or department in the Ministry of Health responsible for non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Half of those countries now have an integrated operational plan with a dedicated budget. The number of countries that have conducted recent surveys of risk factors jumped from 30 per cent in 2011 to 63 per cent last year. In other words, an increasing number of countries are putting the basics in place. As shown in the progress report, some very cost-effective and affordable interventions have worked well in many countries.

However, the report found that overall progress was insufficient and highly uneven, as the President said. That should come as no surprise. I see no lack of political commitment but a lack of capacity to act, especially in the developing world. Our most recent data show that 85 per cent of premature deaths from NCDs occur in developing countries. The challenges presented by such diseases are enormous. They demand some fundamental changes in the way that social progress is measured, that Governments work, that responsibilities are assigned and that the boundaries of the different Government sectors are defined.

The fact that NCDs have overtaken infectious diseases as the world's leading cause of morbidity and mortality has profound consequences. It is a seismic shift that calls for sweeping changes in the very mindset of public health. Most health systems in the developing world were built for the management of brief events, such as childbirth or acute infections. They were not built for the long-term management of chronic conditions, with their costly and demanding implications and complications. Public health must shift its focus from cure to prevention, from short-term to long-term management, from delivering babies, vaccines and antibiotics to changing human behaviour, and from acting alone to acting in concert with multiple sectors and partners.

The dynamics of socioeconomic progress have changed. Much of human history has been shaped by the struggle against infectious diseases, which have gradually lost their hold as incomes have risen and standards of living have improved. What do I mean by that? Today, the opposite is happening. Socioeconomic progress is actually creating the conditions that favour the rise of non-communicable diseases.

Economic growth, modernization and urbanization have opened wide the entry point for the globalization of unhealthy lifestyles. Risk factors for NCDs are becoming part of the very fabric of modern society. The obesity epidemic has been getting worse, not better, for more than three decades. Industry practices, especially the marketing of junk food, or unhealthy foods and beverages, to children play a contributory role.

Paragraph 44 of the Political Declaration, which calls for collaboration with the private sector, has not been fully implemented. Healthier food reformulations are neither affordable nor accessible in large parts of the developing world. Unfortunately, the unhealthiest foods are usually the cheapest and most convenient. Another concern is the fact that highly effective measures for reducing the harmful use of alcohol, such as raising taxes on alcohol and enforcing advertising bans, are vastly underused in countries.

The health-care sector bears the brunt of such diseases but has very little control over their causes. The health-care and medical professions can appeal for stronger tobacco and alcohol legislation, more exercise and healthier diets. We can treat the diseases but we cannot re-engineer social environments to promote healthy lifestyles. That is another shift that needs to take place. Governments cannot assume that NCDs are a health problem that the health-care sector can manage on its own. We cannot. We need a broad-based multisectoral partnership to address the multidimensional reasons for the rise in NCDs.

For prevention, which is the cornerstone of our response, Governments need to assume the primary role and their responsibility. Social environments need to change population-wide and nationwide. That will not happen without political commitment at the highest level of Government. Ministers of agriculture will quite rightly remain primarily concerned about the abundance and safety of the food supply and the livelihoods of farmers. Ministers of education will not automatically improve school meals, remove vending machines that sell unhealthy snacks or make programmes for physical activity a part of the school curriculum. Ministers of trade will of course continue to promote direct foreign investment agreements that allow the tobacco industry to take legal action against Governments introducing strong anti-tobacco measures. We need to ask the question as to why we see such policy inconsistency, which is not conducive to a multisectoral and coherent approach to addressing the NCD challenges.

Only high-level political commitment can orchestrate the kind of broad-based collaboration needed to make substantial progress, especially on prevention. Heads of State and Government are best placed to introduce coherent public policies, coordinate actions and push for legislative support. Unprecedented challenges need unprecedented commitments. I am confident that, under the leadership of Heads of State and Government, we are moving into a very positive area of work, collaborating with all partners. Allow me once again to thank the General Assembly for all its support over the years and its continuing support.

The President: Pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 68/271, I now give the floor to Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and Chair of the United Nations Development Group.

Ms. Clark (United Nations Development Programme): I am delighted to be speaking alongside my colleague, Ms. Margaret Chan, at this High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, which aims to assess the progress made in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) since the September 2011 Political Declaration. As both Chair of the United Nations Development Group and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), I want to fully acknowledge up front that the major challenge that NCDs pose to public health is also a huge challenge to human development overall. Health is simply inseparable from human development. The great health challenges of today, among which are infant, child and maternal mortality, malaria, HIV and NCDs, all impact on the capacity of people to survive and thrive. Advancing better health is a gateway to development progress, and development progress is a gateway to improving health. It is vital that the social determinants of health be addressed.

For too long, non-communicable diseases were regarded as a problem of high-income countries, which they are. However, not acknowledging them as a broader problem has meant that the ways in which they impede development progress and impact on the lives of the world's poorest people have yet to be fully addressed. The 2011 Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (resolution 66/2, annex) did a great deal to correct misperceptions about NCDs by noting explicitly that developing countries are home to 80 per cent of the world's NCD-related deaths.

Today, low- and middle-income countries are bearing the brunt of the NCDs. Understanding the far-reaching development consequences of that is therefore very important. For example, for lower- and middle-income countries, the economic costs of the four main NCDs — that is, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes — are predicted to exceed $7 trillion between 2011 and 2025. That is roughly equivalent to $500 billion per year, or 4 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of low- and middle-income countries as measured four years ago.

Looking ahead, it will be critical to understand the changing patterns of NCD distribution and to ensure that all the relevant actors are involved and

that adequate resources are made available to combat the epidemic of diseases. With respect to disease distribution overall, disparities in health outcomes tend to mirror the existing inequalities and inequities within and among countries. That also holds true for NCDs, with the disease burden falling on the most vulnerable and the least able to manage the long-term impacts of such diseases. What may be a treatable or manageable condition in a high-income setting can therefore be life-threatening in a low-income one. The average age of death from cardiovascular disease in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, is at least 10 years below that in developed countries. The death rate among women in Africa as a result of NCDs is twice as high as the rate in high-income countries.

The developmental costs of NCDs also have a disproportionate impact on poor families and poor countries. A study in the Sudan, for example, showed that for a family with a child with diabetes, 65 per cent of that family's annual health spending was on the child's diabetic care. A 2012 report of the World Bank estimates that dialysis for patients with diabetes-related kidney failure cost the Government of Samoa $38,700 per patient per year in 2010 to 2011. That amount is 12 times higher than the country's per capita gross national income.

The key behavioural risk factors, including tobacco and alcohol use, poor nutrition and physical inactivity, are very strongly determined by broader social, legal and environmental factors — for example, the concentration of alcohol advertising or the absence of parks in poorer areas. In this country I have seen the term "food desert" coined for areas where there is simply no ready supply of fresh food and vegetables for people to buy. Tobacco use, which alone costs the world 1 to 2 per cent of its GDP every year, is concentrated among the poorest people, whatever the income level of the country.

Recognizing those very significant social determinants of NCDs, UNDP advocates strong action within and beyond the health sector. Indeed, more than half the recommended policy options and cost-effective interventions included in the World Health Organization's Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020 require action outside the health-care sector. The good news is that measures like those outlined by Ms. Chan today cost very little in contrast to the mega-costs of NCD treatment. But the measures she outlined require major political will and commitment from the very top leadership of countries. We hope that very significant meetings like today's will help to generate that will.

Let us see health in the broader context of sustainable development. Sustainable development calls for integrated policymaking across the economic, social and environmental spheres. That is an approach that is highly consistent with the multisectoral approaches required to address NCDs. To make progress, patterns of trade and consumption will need to be revisited, as will governance and urbanization, to name but a few issues. We cannot just treat and manage those diseases through medical interventions.

Discussions here today and with regard to the post-2015 development agenda offer good opportunities to ensure that NCDs are seen more broadly as a development challenge — a huge health challenge and a broader development challenge. At the United Nations Development Programme, we welcome the ongoing discussions on proposed targets to reduce NCD-related mortality and to strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the world's first international treaty on a health issue.

But accelerating efforts on NCDs cannot wait. Those diseases are placing an enormous burden on health systems now, accounting for approximately three quarters of global health-care spending. Governments in countries at all income levels can start cross-sectoral interventions now. For example, zoning ordinances that restrict the density of fast-food restaurants in low-income urban areas can address inequities and be implemented at little or no cost.

With no global financing mechanism for NCD responses, innovation in the use of domestic sources of revenues, such as through national trust funds or higher taxes on unhealthy products, will also be needed. Measures that incentivize the production, trade and consumption of healthy food, as opposed to foods high in processed sugars, salt and fat, should become the norm. I commend Tonga, which recently raised duties on unhealthy foods and decreased import duties on fresh fish. It has also introduced higher excise tax rates on tobacco products. More broadly, as national incomes and revenue flows to State treasuries grow, Governments need to direct more of the benefits of that growth towards national NCD responses and work to reduce the impact of unhealthy products.

But no country can fight the epidemic alone. The 2011 Political Declaration recognized

> "the important role of the international community and international cooperation in assisting Member States, particularly developing countries, in complementing national efforts to generate an effective response to non-communicable diseases" (*resolution 66/2, annex, para. 4*).

Managing the growing burden of NCDs is especially challenging for already overburdened health systems in countries where the battle against preventable communicable diseases and low life expectancy is ongoing. Some countries, including small island developing States, have particular NCD issues to address. For example, diabetes in Pacific Island countries is almost 50 per cent more prevalent than it is in lower- and middle-income countries globally. While life expectancy across developing countries as a whole is rising, in some where it appears to be dropping the devastating impact of NCDs is playing a role in that regression.

I believe that support for countries tackling NCD epidemics must be seen as a broader global responsibility, not just because of the inherent injustice in persisting disparities in health across countries, but also because patterns of globalization and international trade contribute to those inequities. For example, although lower- and middle-income countries bear the brunt of NCD mortality, it is often the upper-income countries, which are home to the largest producers and exporters of tobacco and unhealthy foods, that are contributing to the disease patterns.

At the United Nations Development Programme, we stand ready to work with our close partner, the World Health Organization, all other United Nations agencies, civil society and other partners to support Member States in accelerating the implementation of comprehensive national responses for the prevention and control of NCDs. Our collective responsibility and action must match the scale of the challenge that NCDs now present to countries rich and poor alike. Without much more dramatic action, the threat to sustained human development from those diseases is very high indeed.

The President: Pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 68/271, I now give the floor to the President-elect of the Union for International Cancer Control, Mr. Tezer Kutluk.

Mr. Kutluk (Union for International Cancer Control): It is both an honour and a privilege to be here today to represent civil society to convey the passion we share in addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) around the world. We are working together and we are united for a common cause. We are reasserting our global commitment to addressing NCDs together. The NCD fight is our generation's commitment to ensuring that our children and our children's children have healthier, longer lives than the ones you, Mr. President, and I can expect.

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I also thank the dedicated Member States present here today, the World Health Organization (WHO) under the leadership of Director-General Margaret Chan for its continued support, and the NCD Alliance for its efforts to mobilize, unite and represent a wide and diverse civil society movement.

NCDs cause more deaths than all other diseases combined — an estimated 36 million every year — and they strike hardest at the world's low- and middle-income populations. In my own country, Turkey, over 300,000 people die from NCDs each year, many without access to the preventive interventions, treatment and palliative care that they desperately need. Those diseases do not discriminate. No country — rich or poor — is immune. No country has those diseases under control. No region is exempt.

At some point in time, history will demand an explanation for why the international community approached the crisis in slow motion; for the acceleration in NCDs is largely a crisis of our own making. We have created a world where more people are overweight than underweight, and where children — even before they are born — are at risk of disease because of factors outside their control. A healthy start to life matters for a lifetime. Economic transition, rapid urbanization and our twenty-first-century lifestyle are coming at a huge cost to the health and development of current and future generations.

I know that everyone here, whether he or she is from Government, civil society, academia or the private sector, is passionate about his or her own cause, be it cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory illness, mental and neurological health or another NCD. My personal journey has been as a paediatric oncologist, researcher and an advocate in the global cancer community.

As many participants may know, childhood cancer exemplifies the gross inequity experienced by those living with NCDs in low- and middle-income countries. While we have the know-how to treat childhood cancer, with over 80 per cent success rates in high-income countries, success rates can drop to as low as 10 per cent in other settings. Even in Turkey, where treatment and care for childhood cancer exist, there are significant challenges. In my hospital, we recently treated a 4-year-old girl, Alia, a refugee living in southern Turkey, who presented with advanced retinoblastoma. When we met Alia, her family told us that she had had a white pupil for at least a year, but that it had not been brought to medical attention. When the disease had progressed to an advanced stage, she was diagnosed and treated, but it was too late to save her eye. Although retinoblastoma is a curable disease whose early diagnosis can preserve sight, that was unfortunately not what happened in Alia's case, and she will have only one eye for the rest of her life. That is only one example of a story that is not unique to Turkey.

Another challenge we face is that, in many settings, only a fraction of children are diagnosed and treated — often with high rates of treatment abandonment. Many others die without any formal diagnosis, treatment or access to palliative care and support, including pain relief. Children and adolescents are an integral part of achieving a comprehensive, lifelong approach to the global prevention and control of NCDs. Those and other stories that I witnessed personally all over the world compel me to stand up for the inequity that exists in addressing cancer and other NCDs. Health is a basic human right. We cannot ignore those who are desperately in need. I am glad to be able to share my perspective and to stand with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others that are making a difference by calling for an immediate increase in action in order to prevent millions of premature deaths from NCDs.

Three years ago, the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases helped convert political inaction into political leadership. It reaffirmed that we know what works, and that cost-effective solutions exist. It resulted in priorities and commitments. It led to global accountability, with the first set of global targets and a goal of reducing the number of premature deaths from NCDs by 25 per cent by 2025. And it put NCDs firmly on the global health and development agenda. I applaud Member States, the World Health Organization, the United Nations and everyone in this Hall for those bold steps forward. But they are not enough.

The question this week, as we review the progress that has been made three years on, is about what must be done to carry forward the momentum. How do we translate the progress made at the global level into national action and implementation? We know there are no magic bullets for this epidemic, and we will not see any change overnight. That has certainly been evident in the past three years. How do we unlock the power of the Political Declaration at the national level for the hundreds of millions of people with NCDs and the millions more at risk?

Today I urge Member States to do the following. First, Governments have rightly taken ownership of and responsibility for the NCD response. We therefore call for accelerated, coordinated and harmonized national responses to NCDs, through funded multisectoral national plans, multisectoral national NCD commissions and country-level monitoring and evaluation systems.

Secondly, NCDs are one of the major challenges to sustainable human development in the twenty-first century, and should therefore be central to the post-2015 development agenda. We have always given our full support to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In countries like my own, the MDGs have driven impressive progress on many health issues. But if we are not careful, we may let all that progress slip away. If we do not work together to secure a stand-alone target on NCDs, we will have missed an enormous opportunity. For it is those future goals that will drive global action and resources on health and development, just as the MDGs have done until now.

Thirdly, Member States and the international community should urgently address the global resource gap in NCDs at both the global and national levels. The struggle for funding for NCDs remains a monumental challenge. The evidence tells us that NCDs are the world's number-one killer, and yet they receive only 1.2 per cent of the $31 billion in development assistance allocated to health. That just makes no sense. By investing up front in NCD prevention and control, we can ensure that we will save not only human lives and misery, but also the dollars currently spent on costly, avoidable complications. We call on Governments to maximize innovative financing mechanisms, notably tobacco taxation, that have been proven to curb NCDs and raise significant revenue, and we urge bilateral development agencies to start taking NCDs seriously.

Finally, above all, we need a people's movement for NCDs, a movement led by people affected or living with these diseases that is rooted in human rights and social justice and that actively holds Governments to account. We are not just fighting for people's human rights; we are fighting for people's lives. We must join forces, and not let silos get in the way. Collectively, we must say enough is enough.

It is our generation's responsibility to stem the tide of NCDs. We must be able to look our children in the eye and say that as parents we made every effort to ensure that they do not face the fear of NCDs we are facing today. It is simply not beyond us to make giant steps on this journey. Together, NGOs, the private sector and academia are committed to working with Member States to mobilize action on NCDs. The time for talk is over. Action is not an option, it is an imperative.

The President: We have heard the last speaker for the opening segment of the High-level Meeting.

As members are aware, pursuant to resolution 68/271, this High-level Meeting consists of two plenary meetings, which will take place today in this Hall, two consecutive round-table discussions and a closing plenary meeting, which will take place tomorrow in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. Delegations are encouraged to use the opportunity during the round-table discussions to pose questions and respond in an interactive manner to the comments and presentations made by panellists and other experts. The plenary segment will begin immediately following the conclusion of this opening segment and will continue until 1 p.m. The plenary segment will resume this afternoon from 3 to 6 p.m.

The first round-table discussion, entitled "Strengthening national and regional capacities, including health systems, and effective multisectoral and whole-of-Government responses for the prevention and control, including monitoring, of non-communicable diseases", will be moderated by Mr. Fenton Ferguson, Minister of Health of Jamaica, and will take place tomorrow morning from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The second round-table discussion, entitled "Fostering and strengthening national, regional and international partnerships and cooperation in support of efforts to address non-communicable diseases", will be moderated by Mr. Howard Koh, Assistant Secretary for Health of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and will take place tomorrow afternoon from 3 to 5 p.m.

The closing plenary meeting, which will take place immediately thereafter, will consist of the presentation of summaries of the round-table discussions by the respective Chairs.

Before we begin with the list of speakers, I would like to turn to some organizational matters pertaining to the conduct of the plenary meetings. First, concerning the length of statements, I would like to remind members that statements in a national capacity will be limited to three minutes. When delivered on behalf of a group, statements should not exceed five minutes. In the light of that time frame, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a normal speed so that interpretation may be properly provided. To assist speakers in managing their time, a light system has been installed at the rostrum. I appeal to all speakers for cooperation in observing the time limit for their statements.

Delegations are also reminded that photographs of speakers delivering statements in the plenary of the General Assembly are taken routinely and are available for download in high resolution from the United Nations website, www.unmultimedia.org/photo, and from the United Nations Photo Library, located in room S-1047 in the Secretariat Building.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Michel Blokland, Minister of Health of Suriname, who will speak on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Blokland (Suriname): The group of countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) makes the following statement on the draft outcome document of the High-level Meeting on the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (A/68/L.53).

Recalling the value of the United Nations High-level Meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) of September 2011 (see A/66/PV.3) and feeling pride that our small countries catalysed the convening of that historic High-level Meeting, beginning with the 2007 Declaration of Port-of-Spain of the CARICOM Heads of Governments, entitled "Uniting to Stop the Epidemic of Chronic NCDs", and the actions contained therein for a broad range of upstream and downstream promotion,

prevention and control measures, we recognize the profound threat that NCDs pose to the development of our small States, since NCDs are both a cause and an effect of poverty. Furthermore, we recognize that the problem is linked to other major development challenges, such as food security, climate change and poverty reduction. We recall that studies in our region show that NCDs, such as hypertension and diabetes, are alone responsible for the loss of 5 to 8 per cent of the gross domestic product and represent significant preventable impediments to our economic growth.

Within the overall challenge of NCDs, the CARICOM countries are deeply concerned about the rapid increase in overweight and obesity among children in all our countries, including Haiti — it has doubled or tripled in the past 20 years in several of the countries for which we have the data. One quarter to one third of children and adolescents are now overweight or obese, with implications for higher lifetime health-care costs, lower educational attainment, stigma, mental-health issues and greater difficulties in finding future employment. It is a complex problem that requires a life-course approach and intervention at multiple levels.

We are pleased about several aspects of the progress in the countries of our region since 2011, which we know from the annual monitoring of 26 progress indicators of NCD prevention and control in 19 countries since the Port-of-Spain Declaration of 2007. We would be happy to share that experience with other States members of the World Health Organization (WHO) and States Members of the United Nations.

The NCD progress indicator scorecard was developed in 2008 to track the progress of the States members of CARICOM in relation to the tenets of the Port-of-Spain Declaration. Over the past five years, it has been a useful tool for assessing regional progress, particularly by highlighting the areas of advancement and those in need of greater attention. We will soon begin an evaluation of the Port-of-Spain Declaration with a view to learning lessons in order to accelerate multisectoral action. It will be undertaken by the University of the West Indies, the University of Toronto and the Caribbean Public Health Agency. We thank and acknowledge the International Development Research Centre of Canada for the support that it has provided for such essential work, which, we believe, is a sign of leadership on the part of our countries in taking stock of the progress and making course corrections to achieve the tenets of the Port-of-Spain Declaration and the United Nations High-level Meeting on NCDs.

Since 2011, annual monitoring has shown that there has been progress in the areas of commitment to dealing with NCDs, as evidenced by national plans and budgets, the convening of national multisectoral meetings, tobacco control and physical activity. Four of our countries, namely, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Jamaica, are now smoke-free despite well-orchestrated industry opposition in each case. We now aspire to a smoke-free Caribbean by 2020. Education, promotion and surveillance have remained the same, but there has been slippage in nutrition and in the care and treatment of NCDs. Surveillance, however, continues to be the area with the highest attainment in our countries, anchored by the Caribbean Public Health Agency and with the support of the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization, followed by a commitment to NCD prevention and control, tobacco control, physical activity and treatment, with the least progress made in the area of nutrition.

We are pleased that 14 countries have completed or are carrying out the WHO STEPS risk factor surveys, which provide essential data to educate our population and to help drive policy development and action plans. The surveys also inform us that we continue to face a major problem, as a third to a half of adults have three or more risk factors, and are therefore at a significantly higher risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer or diabetes and their complications, as well as higher lifetime health costs.

Nutrition and a healthy diet remain the areas with the least progress in relation to the Port-of-Spain Declaration. We have seen little or no progress with respect to removing trans-fats from the food supply, enacting labelling laws, leveraging trade agreements to reduce the obesogenic environments in which we live, regulating the situation of school food or reducing the bombardment of advertising of foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar, in particular to children.

With the regional rising trends in obesity, especially childhood obesity, and other nutrition-related chronic diseases and the impact of poor nutrition on general health, it is imperative that nutrition be prioritized for urgent attention. With that in mind, we are taking steps for a joint meeting of CARICOM health and trade and economic development ministers.

The situation of a rapidly increasing body mass of our populations underlines the vulnerability of small States, in particular small island developing States, which are highly vulnerable to external man-made economic or environmental shocks. We hoped that the draft outcome document will explicitly recognize such vulnerability of our small countries and island States. Many of them have graduated to an upper middle- or high-income status but remain vulnerable due to their small size, limited human resources and reliance on imported food.

Pursuant to that, while recognizing the many benefits of liberalized trade, we would have liked the draft outcome document to include an explicit clause that trade and foreign policy negotiations should take into consideration how obesogenic environments can be reduced and NCDs prevented and controlled.

While monitoring shows that we have made some progress, there remain many challenges shared by many countries around the world, large and small, developing and developed. Indeed, that is why we are gathered here at the United Nations, because the problem cannot be solved by the health sector or the WHO alone. Continuing attention to, and consideration of, this issue is needed from development partners, such as the World Bank, the European Union, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Multilateral Investment Fund, as well as our own Caribbean Development Bank, in order to ensure that the prevention and control of NCDs is included in poverty-reduction packages and social protection policies.

We need recognition that the problem of NCDs is linked to other pressing development challenges, and that solutions can have multiple benefits. For example, urban planning and transportation policies that promote rapid mass transit and alternative modes of transportation, such as biking and walking, are good for health, through increased physical activity; good for the planet and climate change, through a reduction of greenhouse gases; and good for energy security and foreign exchange costs for fossil fuels. That is a triple bottom-line return, to which we should all aspire.

We need partnerships and technology transfers to help produce healthier foods; we need the transnational companies that supply most of our food to progressively reduce its salt and sugar content, label its packaging clearly on the front and provide education programmes for consumers, among other measures. Above all, we need investment to accelerate the implementation of the best-buys in the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020. We need civil society to play its part in advocating and acting as a watchdog for Government and private sector alike. In that regard, we commend the work of the Healthy Caribbean Coalition, which was formed after the 2007 Declaration of Port-of-Spain as a 45-member alliance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to the prevention and control of NCDs.

We need the private sector to bring its considerable capacities to bear in the area of healthy workplace programmes and policies that all employers, private and public, can implement. We need the collaboration of media and telecommunications companies in supporting participatory surveillance approaches and the education of our healthy populations, as well as of those who are living with chronic diseases and risk factors. We need insurance companies to invest in NCD prevention and control, and to support the institutions that are working in that area, thereby creating shared value for us all. We need more integrated approaches, such as some of our countries are already taking on the ground in order to integrate chronic care of illnesses such as NCDs and HIV/AIDS.

On behalf of Suriname, I would like to say that over the next three years, until the next review takes place, we must make more progress than we have done during the past three. For that, we need action on the part of our Governments, NGOs, the private sector and development agencies. We are in this epidemic of cardiovascular and other NCDs together, and we will all suffer from their short- and longer-term consequences unless we start working to create healthy nutritional, living, working and recreational environments for our citizens. We call for more commitment and more financial and technical support for tackling NCDs and their risk factors, in order to ensure that our generation, and those of the future, can live healthier and more productive lives.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We welcome the timely convening of this High-level Meeting on the progress achieved in the implementation

of the 2011 Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (resolution 66/2, annex).

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the subject (A/68/650). We would also like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Belgium and Jamaica, who capably steered the process that has produced a successful result in the form of the draft outcome document of this meeting (A/68/L.53), and you, Mr. President, for finalizing the preparations for this important meeting. I would also like to thank the representative of Trinidad and Tobago for her efforts in coordinating the work of our Group.

We should recall that in 2011, for the first time, we tackled the issue of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which are the principal cause of death in many countries, particularly ours. The burden of those diseases is not just a critical health problem; it is also a significant obstacle to our achievement of our development goals. For that reason, the Organization must continue to play a fundamental role in the treatment, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, and to ensure that it is adequately addressed in the context of the international development agenda. Since we are now reviewing the progress that has been made since 2011, we should once again commit to meeting the goals established in the Political Declaration and to increasing our efforts to prevent and control NCDs, particularly cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease, as well as other non-communicable diseases that have contributed to their overall increase, such as neurological and mental disorders.

We recognize that, to a great extent, non-communicable diseases are preventable, and there are many measures that States can take to reduce the risk factors that contribute to their development and to premature mortality. Therefore, while we acknowledge States' primary role in meeting their populations' health needs, we would like to urge that cooperation be strengthened at all levels and that all those concerned intensify their relevant commitments, in a truly multisectoral approach that involves areas beyond that of health and that requires effective control and prevention of the incidence and prevalence of non-communicable diseases and mitigates their economic and social impact.

Another important aspect of the fight against NCDs is related to the establishment and strengthening at all levels of effective systems aimed at evaluating its effect and monitoring advances in treatment, prevention and control. In that regard, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the progress made by States that have instituted policies at the national level and provided the necessary resources for implementing them. Nonetheless, it is clear that the progress made since 2011 in treating non-communicable diseases has been insufficient and unequal, owing to a number of challenges, such as the need for building States' capacities and providing adequate resources for implementing strategies and programmes.

In that regard, while we are committed to reinforcing efforts that have already been undertaken, we also call for strengthening effective partnerships through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation and for fulfilling all official development assistance pledges aimed at helping national efforts to combat NCDs. We also emphasize the fundamental role of other international organizations, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society in the work of the prevention and control of these diseases. Since it is particularly crucial to monitor resources to address non-communicable diseases as a part of the supervisory and assessment framework, we call for further support in that area to develop and strengthen national capacities, as appropriate.

Although we have recognized that non-communicable diseases are in large part preventable, there is also a great need for treatment through vaccinations and basic medicines. We therefore take advantage of this opportunity to emphasize the importance of ensuring access to affordable, effective, safe and high-quality medicines and diagnostic and other technologies for treating non-communicable diseases. We recognize the fundamental role that generic drugs continue to play in that respect, in particular in developing countries.

Consequently, we fully reaffirm our right to the flexible use of the intellectual property rights agreement pursuant to the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and public health. Similarly, we recognize the need to efficiently apply the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property as an important tool to help to develop national capacities in developing countries in order to strengthen public health and guarantee universal access to medicines and medical technologies.

Since 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) has finalized a series of strategies and tools useful

for helping to treat non-communicable diseases on a global scale. We therefore welcome that significant contribution, which includes the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020, as well as the Action Plan's indicators for monitoring its implementation programme and the global coordination mechanism for the prevention and control of those diseases. Given the need for greater and better multisectoral action and coordination in this area, including, above all, the United Nations system, we also welcome with satisfaction the establishment of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases. We expect to participate actively in the Task Force to that end. We also look forward with interest to the assistance of the Task Force in supporting national efforts and in developing adequate capacities for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its full commitment to addressing non-communicable diseases and to working with all the relevant partners at all levels and in all sectors in that respect. We will also continue to firmly support giving priority to non-communicable diseases and their treatment in the international development agenda, with the aim of guaranteeing that the important health-care challenges we face are specifically and adequately addressed, as are the issues of the productivity of our peoples and the integral development of our countries.

The President: Members will recall that at the outset I indicated that we had before us a draft resolution issued as document A/68/L.53. Bearing in mind the presence of ministers and heads of delegation here with us, I shall now proceed to the adoption of the draft resolution.

We have received the necessary information on the budget implications, so we are ready to proceed with the adoption of the draft resolution. For those who do care about such matters, I can assure them that the adoption of the draft resolution will have no budget implications.

The Assembly will therefore now proceed to consider draft resolution A/68/L.53. I should now like to propose an oral revision to the draft resolution, inserting the phrase "to 13 June 2014" at the end of paragraph 9 of the draft resolution. The last line of the paragraph would therefore read "endorsement of its terms of reference by the Economic and Social Council on 13 June 2014".

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/68/L.53, entitled "Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases", as orally revised.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution A/68/L.53, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/68/L.53, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 68/300).

The President: I would like to express my sincere thanks to Her Excellency Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet, Permanent Representative of Belgium, and His Excellency Mr. E. Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica, who so ably and patiently conducted the discussions and complex negotiations in the informal consultations on the outcome document. I am sure members of the Assembly join me in extending to them our sincerest appreciation.

I now give the floor to the Head of Delegation of the European Union, its Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, His Excellency Mr. Tonio Borg.

Mr. Borg (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries Turkey, Serbia and Albania, the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

First of all, I would like to convey our appreciation to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the secretariat of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the facilitators for their commitment and hard work in preparing this Meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

In 2011, here at the General Assembly, we highlighted the growing burden of non-communicable diseases and we identified the foundation stones that needed to be put in place to facilitate and stimulate action to prevent and control NCDs. We did that in the knowledge that addressing NCDs could lead to enormous gains for people's health and for social and economic development across the world.

The burden of non-communicable diseases in terms of preventable death, disability and the loss of human potential, as well as in financial terms, is too high. We know that a great deal of that burden is preventable through action to deal with the risk factors, such as tobacco, harmful alcohol consumption, an unhealthy diet and the lack of physical activity, as well as the underlying social, economic and environmental determinants, such as air pollution. Such risk factors are not equally distributed across the population. The European Union and its member States recognize that the international community, in particular the lowest-income countries, face extraordinary challenges. We are ready to support them in addressing NCDs and the risk factors in accordance with national priorities and national and international commitments, including the strengthening of health and regulatory systems and the involvement of health non-governmental organizations and other civil-society groups.

To achieve results, it is essential that national Governments integrate the prevention and control of NCDs into the overall strengthening of their health systems and avoid fragmentation into separate disease-specific activities. The EU and its member States welcome the progress achieved. We continue to look to the WHO for leadership, with the full participation of Member States and civil society, including non-State actors, with regard to the next steps. Those include the implementation of the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020, monitoring the progress made and strengthening international cooperation. We trust that the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs and the global coordination mechanism will further enhance coordination in that respect. We applaud the focus on health promotion and prevention and on strengthening the commitment to addressing health determinants, in particular with the aim of reducing health inequalities. We need to involve all sectors in addressing NCDs, including all levels of Government, and all the relevant stakeholders.

In conclusion, the European Union and its member States believe that it is now time to act and to move to implementation. We look forward to working closely with the WHO, the global coordination mechanism, the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force agencies, Member States, civil society and non-State actors in addressing the global challenge of chronic diseases.

Mr. Uribe (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretariat for facilitating this important space for dialogue. I would also like to underscore the importance of this initiative, which began in September 2011 and brings us together again today. This meeting is a great opportunity to coordinate our efforts and to strengthen a global response to a health problem that causes hundreds of millions of deaths every year and, as has already been emphasized this morning, is one of the main development challenges of our countries.

I shall first talk about the situation in my country, while emphasizing some of the achievements in recent years. I will then touch on the challenges that developing countries face with regard to non-communicable diseases.

In Colombia, non-communicable diseases account for more than 80 per cent of the total burden of disease and 58 per cent of mortalities. They cause more than 100,000 deaths each year. Of those deaths, 30 per cent are associated with diseases of the circulatory system, 20 per cent with neoplasms, 6 per cent with respiratory diseases and 4 per cent with diabetes. I would like to share a number of policies that we have undertaken in the context of a national action framework for the control and prevention of non-communicable diseases.

First, as a result of a participatory undertaking that brought together hundreds of organizations in Colombia, for the next 10 years we have an intersectoral national public health plan that was drawn up in a participatory way with a focus on the social determinants of health. The plan outlines a set of policies that promote a healthy lifestyle and access to comprehensive health care with a differential focus. Under that framework, an intersectoral commission was established to coordinate the various sectors responsible for achieving the health goals.

Secondly, apart from that 10-year public health plan, the country has a 10-year plan for cancer control. That plan provides for the development and adoption of clinical practice guidelines, as well as vaccination against human papillomavirus for all young people in Colombia. We have achieved the highest level of coverage in the second dose of the vaccination. The cancer control plan has also made it possible to reorganize the provision of cancer services and to manage the resources necessary to ensure effective coverage and quality care.

Thirdly, our country recently adopted a drug policy in order to ensure access to medicines. We have included 200 new drugs in the benefit package, which today is available to 98 per cent of Colombians. We now have almost universal health insurance coverage. At the same time, we have implemented a policy to regulate drug prices based on a comparison with international prices. We have regulated more than 300 monopolies or concentrated markets, which is equivalent to the same number of active ingredients. The regulation has facilitated access to expensive drugs for cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and other illnesses. The annual savings for the health-care system in regulated drug prices exceed $2.5 billion.

Fourthly, in order to reduce risk factors, Colombia has undertaken a series of regulatory actions to reduce consumption and to prevent tobacco exposure. Those actions have had very positive results. Over the past six years, the prevalence of tobacco use has fallen by 5 per cent, from 17 to 12 per cent. That result clearly shows that comprehensive prevention policies can have a positive impact on public health.

Finally, we have implemented a comprehensive health information system and have reorganized our national system of surveys so as to have analytical tools to monitor the overall situation with regard to health and non-communicable diseases.

However, despite such achievements, we face great challenges in continuing to move forward in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. Most developed and developing countries also face those challenges, as has been underscored several times this morning. By way of illustration, I would like to quickly share four of those common challenges.

The first challenge is sustainability. The growing significance of non-communicable diseases increases the technological constraints, and may therefore jeopardize the sustainability of health-care systems. In Colombia, spending on health care per capita is between five and 10 times lower than in developed countries. However, most of our citizens now insist on immediate access to new and increasingly expensive technology for the diagnosis and treatment of non-communicable diseases.

The second challenge that I would like to emphasize this morning is that of equity. The preponderance of non-communicable diseases results in a large proportion of resources for health being directed to the urban middle and upper classes, which have greater access to diagnostic and treatment centres and to medical specialists.

Sustainability and equity are therefore the first two challenges that I wanted to underscore.

A third challenge relates to the way in which health services are provided. As a result of the change in epidemiological profiles, we need to redefine the role of primary health services and the remit of health professionals towards prevention and risk management and towards comprehensive, timely and effective care of diseases.

The last challenge, which is shared by everyone, relates to the political economy of health policies. In the context of non-communicable diseases, policies must now have a broader scope. For example, regulatory actions regarding taxes on tobacco, certain food items and alcohol often go beyond the purview of health authorities, and therefore require the support of other sectors and of the international community.

Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Since 2011, Colombia has been making important progress in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. We are grateful for this opportunity to share our achievements and concerns with the Assembly. We believe that non-communicable diseases should be a part of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. We therefore welcome this opportunity to build together a global response to a problem that concerns almost equally the entire planet.

Mr. Ferguson (Jamaica): Jamaica aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and on behalf of the Caribbean Community group.

I speak as a proud Jamaican and a Caribbean citizen. Three years since 2011 is a short time for planning, implementation and evaluation, but it is a good time to review progress. The very nature of the epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) presents us with imperatives that make this review and a recommitment to action both timely and necessary.

Jamaica is dedicated to the task of addressing both the health and development impacts of NCDs. One matter of focus in addressing the NCD epidemic is access to health care. The challenge of confronting the

NCD epidemic is magnified by the effect that a lack of access has on life.

Historical and economic realities dictate a gradualist approach to mitigation. The attainment of universal health coverage is therefore a journey, not a destination. It is the continued delicate balance between strategically allocating resources for long-term goals and addressing immediate needs. We already have good examples in health, such as global immunization programmes and the HIV response. Universal health care warrants a similar approach. The question therefore is, how do we move from policy to implementation? How do we fund universal health care?

The resource question is particularly significant for small island developing States like Jamaica, where Governments fund the cost of health care for our populations. Many may pontificate that 6 per cent of gross domestic product spent on health is the magic that is needed; but having lived that reality, I would humbly ask that we think again. We must acknowledge that the life course cost of treatment for NCDs, including medicines, and the imminent danger of tiered pricing models on inputs, such as vaccines, will undermine our best efforts to realize the universal health care dream.

The world cannot treat itself out of the NCD epidemic. We in Jamaica, while strategically targeting risk factors, started with the main one, that of tobacco use. Despite immense odds, we felt it was an attainable prospect. I am pleased to report unprecedented public acceptance of the regulations that limit the impact of tobacco on health. Preliminary reports indicate fewer admissions in our health facilities for respiratory illnesses.

We have promulgated a national NCD strategic plan for the period 2013 to 2018, which has been approved by the Cabinet and introduced in the Parliament. Importantly, it has benefited from broad stakeholder consultations under the leadership of a national multisectoral NCD committee established within a few weeks of the adoption of the September 2011 Political Declaration.

In addressing other risk factors, such as an unhealthy diet and the harmful use of alcohol, we have, in a principled way, constructively engaged industry players. However, we look forward to agreed guidelines for the engagement of all stakeholders towards minimizing the effects of NCD risk factors. Specifically, there also must be global commitment. We have seen the success of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control as a public health treaty, which can be used as an example.

Jamaica subscribes to the view that health must be an integral component of the post-2015 development agenda and that NCDs must be adequately addressed therein. The commitment to reducing NCD-related premature deaths by 25 per cent by 2025 "will remain but a fleeting illusion to be pursued, but never attained" — in the words popularized by Jamaica's reggae icon Bob Marley — if we do not scale up our responses. We must do everything in our power to avert that possibility.

Ms. Juan López (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour to participate in this exercise, which is aimed at reviewing the progress made by our countries in implementation of the commitments undertaken in the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, adopted by the General Assembly in September 2011 (resolution 66/2, annex).

In consolidating the inclusive Mexico that has been called for by the President of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, and in implementing the Political Declaration before us, our Government has fully assumed its responsibility in the face of the challenge posed by non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Mexico is in a process of demographic transition characterized by an increase in life expectancy and in the number of older adults. Chronic NCDs relate basically to four common risk factors: tobacco consumption, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful consumption of alcohol. These are complex and multifaceted problems that affect all sectors of society as well as the individual.

In Mexico, in order to control tobacco use, we have promoted a law on tobacco control inspired by the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and 95 per cent of public places such as restaurants are now tobacco-free. In a four-year period, tobacco taxes have increased by 200 per cent. We have also agreed with industry to decrease the salt content of bread in order to combat high blood pressure.

We have also promoted the installation of alcohol breathalyzers in 100 cities; over a five-year period, that has led to a 20 per cent reduction in the number of injuries and deaths from traffic accidents related to alcohol consumption.

In order to prevent cervical and uterine cancer, we have included in our universal vaccination system a vaccine against the human papilloma virus, which for the past three years has been given to all girls at the age of 11. In order to reduce the number of cases of liver cancer, our universal vaccination system also includes a hepatitis B vaccine.

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia is one the principal childhood cancers. However, thanks to our universal coverage of this illness, among the more than 1,500 children afflicted, the survival rate is 84 per cent.

However, the main public-health problem that we in Mexico are facing is that of excess weight, obesity and diabetes, of which we have one of the highest rates in the world. In accordance with the national health survey carried out in 2012, about 70 per cent of adults and 30 per cent of our children are overweight or obese. According to the same survey, diabetes now affects 9.2 per cent of our population.

Therefore the President of the Republic, Enrique Peña Nieto, in October 2013 presented to Mexican society a national strategy for the prevention and control of overweight, obesity and diabetes. This is a comprehensive strategy that has three pillars: public health, medical care, and regulatory and fiscal policy, approached from the perspective of social influences.

The strategy promotes the elaboration of a public policy that brings about profound changes in lifestyles, healthy food consumption habits and an increase in physical activity among the population. For this purpose, the political Constitution was amended to prohibit the provision in schools of any food that does not contribute to student health. We also promote physical activity in various areas and have undertaken an awareness-raising campaign in the mass media.

As regards medical care, we have developed a comprehensive-care centre for diabetics involving multidisciplinary interventions. This model is being duplicated at the national level. Efforts are also under way relating to a comprehensive-care model based on active prevention that empowers system users through technological innovation at the primary-care level. We have also ensured free universal coverage for prescription drugs for persons benefiting from the national social security system as well as those who do not.

The last pillar is the health and fiscal policy regarding food and beverages, which mandates a front label on products stating the total calorie content of a product, with both the calorie source and the percentage in a 2,000-calorie daily diet. We have also created a nutritional seal that will be granted to products that meet the nutritional standards set by the Ministry of Health.

As concerns marketing targeted to children, we have prohibited commercials for chocolates, candy, sodas and snacks at times of day when there is a large child audience.

There is also a special tax on sugared beverages and on high-calorie foods at the rate of 8 per cent for every 100 grams. Those taxes entered into force on 1 January of this year. In order to evaluate the impact of our actions, we have also designed a Mexican monitoring centre on NCDs with the participation of the public sector, the private sector and the social sector.

Following the guidelines of the Political Declaration, we have shared this experience with the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank.

At the regional level, we recently established a technical group jointly with Canada and the United States, and at the bilateral level we are cooperating with the Government of France.

I am certain that the aforementioned efforts represent a strong foundation to reverse this difficult epidemiological situation, so that Mexico can contribute to the construction of a global society that enjoys greater well-being.

Mr. Ibovi (Congo) (*spoke in French*): It is my honour to take the floor in the General Assembly in my dual capacity as Chairman of the sixty-third session of the World Health Organization's Regional Committee for Africa and as Minister of Health of the Republic of the Congo.

First of all, I should like to welcome the holding of this High-level Meeting, which is the logical follow-up to the summit held here in 2011 that brought together Heads of State and Government as well as various representatives of States and Governments of Members of the United Nations, to take up the important issue of the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases throughout the world and in particular the challenges that these present for the development of our countries.

Three years ago, the 46 States members of the World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO) adopted the Brazzaville Declaration, affirming that Africa was a continent already being crushed by the very heavy burden of communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Other non-communicable diseases — including cardiovascular diseases, cancers, mental illness, genetic diseases and haemoglobin disorders such as sickle-cell anaemia — were sweeping the populations with unusual force. To these diseases, we would add the consequences of traffic accidents and those related to climate change that some wrongly and ignorantly attribute to witchcraft. The very high indicators related to morbidity and maternal, neonatal and infant mortality are of concern in numerous ways. The universal nature of these diseases has led the international scientific community to place humanity on the alert regarding the challenge they pose not only to populations, but also to development.

Since that time, all the health development plans of WHO/AFRO member countries have undergone significant readjustments in order to take into account the epidemiological transition and its serious consequences. This question now enjoys pride of place at each meeting of African health ministers. The Luanda Declaration, adopted in November 2013, is one example of our Governments' commitment to combating non-communicable diseases.

With respect to the growing reach of these diseases throughout the world, this campaign should not be limited to health ministries. Civil society and all stakeholders working in the health sector must also be involved; hence the interest and importance of stepping up the public and private partnership at the local, regional and international levels so as to better coordinate action to combat disease in general.

In the Republic of the Congo, non-communicable diseases are continue to spread and to pose major containment problems in both technical and financial terms. In our major hospitals, cerebral vascular accidents are now the leading cause of death. The number of patients with renal failure is rising sharply. Sickle-cell anaemia in its heterozygous form affects about 25 per cent of the population and 2 per cent in its homozygous form. The number of new cancer cases rises every year.

The Government, which has made a priority of the fight against illness in general, and non-communicable diseases in particular, recently established general guidelines on epidemiology and the fight against diseases in the health-care system, in which hygiene is the principal element of development. To allow for a more intense mobilization of the efforts of civil society and for the greater involvement of the private and external health sectors, my Government, like others in the region, is now preparing a legal framework for cooperation that will help all health actors to work in synergy.

The delegation of the Republic of the Congo therefore supports the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020, adopted by the World Health Assembly. We would suggest that future actions be focused on the effective mobilization of resources by States; the involvement of other sectors, aside from the health sector, to ensure the containment and reduction of risk factors; the promotion of health; prevention; the screening of risk factors; equal access to health care; the institutionalization of universal health coverage; and the improvement of technical conditions for treating patients.

Aware of the urgent need for all States to take more effective measures to prevent and control non-communicable diseases, my delegation would like once again to underline the importance of prevention and of an effective multisectoral response. We therefore voice our support for resolution 68/300, which we have just adopted and which enjoys our full backing.

Ms. Udval (Mongolia): It is a great honour to participate in this important High-level Meeting to address the most challenging public-health issues. I welcome the adoption of the concise, focused, action-oriented outcome document (resolution 68/300), which will speed up the implementation of the Political Declaration (resolution 66/2, annex). I wish to express our gratitude to the United Nations, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other global partners for their efforts in helping to address the greatest challenges facing the health sector in many countries.

Mongolia attaches great importance to the full implementation of the Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, as well as the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020. With a view to achieving our goals, my Government has been intensely implementing a national programme on the control and prevention of

NCDs. For the past nine years, this has been a priority issue for the health sector in my country.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for 72 per cent of the total disease burden in my country. Thus, they are one of the most serious issues of public health. Moreover, one third of the population is affected by cardiovascular diseases, while one-fifth is affected by cancer and its associated risk factors. Therefore, Mongolia is strongly committed to fully implementing the Political Declaration on NCDs and has been striving to promote a multisectoral response through all-stakeholder partnerships, including civil society.

As members of the Assembly may be aware, in 2009 His Excellency Mr. Elbegdorj Tsakhia, the President of Mongolia, initiated a nation-wide alcohol-free movement in Mongolia. This initiative was well accepted by Mongolian society. We have seen its result in the increased number of alcohol-free communities, villages and provinces. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are actively contributing to the prevention and control of harmful alcohol use and advocating a movement to prevent heavy drinking. As a result, three provinces of Mongolia has been registered as alcohol-free and one province as tobacco-free.

I take this opportunity to recall our President's initiative to draft and adopt a framework convention on alcohol control. In seeking to realize this initiative, the Government of Mongolia has been conducting serious discussions and dialogues at the national, bilateral and international levels. We will continue our efforts to deliver positive outcomes. We strongly believe that a legal document, such as the framework convention on alcohol control, would be the most powerful tool for reducing NCDs in all countries, regardless of their development level.

Allow me to briefly touch upon the actions undertaken by the Government of Mongolia. This year, the Government of Mongolia established a national committee on health, headed by the Prime Minister, and adopted a policy document for multisectoral coordination. The policy document addresses multisectoral commitments to reducing the risk factors of NCDs, which are generated by malfunctions in other sectors. A programme on early detection of five common NCDs has been implemented and a life-course screening programme has been developed.

In addition, in 2012 the Parliament of Mongolia adopted major amendments to the law on tobacco control in order to meet its commitments under the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. This year, it also ratified the WHO Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products. Hence, in accordance with the amended law on tobacco control, smoking in public places, including bars, restaurants and schools, is prohibited. The size of the health warning sign on cigarette packs has increased from 33 per cent to 50 per cent on each side, and the penalty for the abuse of the law has been raised.

In Mongolia, local Governments have been initiating health-friendly community campaigns on maternal and child health care and undertaking daily physical activities to promote wider community participation. Moreover, Mongolian NGOs have initiated a forum on citizens' participation in and ownership of health care. They have been advocating nationwide public awareness on issues including blood-pressure control, health education and common health risk factors. Those activities are financially supported by the Government through a health promotion foundation that has been generated from tax revenues on tobacco and alcohol.

As we all recognize that the global burden and threat of NCDs constitute one of the major challenges to development, we need to strengthen efforts to achieve our common goals and commitments to a world free of NCDs. Therefore, the Government of Mongolia joins the call for including the prevention and control of NCDs — especially alcohol and tobacco control — in the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr. Bustos Villar (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to note that Argentina aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

In my national capacity, I would like to say, as I noted in this Hall at the High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (see A/66/PV.7), the growing epidemic of non-communicable diseases is not a medical or a public health problem; it represents a crossroads in our countries' development efforts and, as such, it is a political problem. That is why we in the Argentine Republic understand that it is on the basis of the State's regulatory power and the active participation of multiple sectors of society that it will be possible to find and sustain over time solutions that will ensure that our citizens' quality of life will not deteriorate or be otherwise affected.

In my country, through the resolute and active involvement of President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, it was decided that the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) would become a priority issue on the public health agenda. That is why substantive progress has been made from that moment on and based on those precise instructions. We have come here today to humbly share the progress made since the 2011 summit in controlling NCDs in their various forms.

We have formed a space for intersectoral coordination. We have established an advisory commission on the prevention and control of NCDs, composed of governmental organizations, such as the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Social Progress, Science and Technology, and non-governmental organizations representing civil society, scientific societies and food producers from the private sector. Furthermore, it has helped to create a space for the coordination, integration, development and implementation of public policy.

We can say with satisfaction and pride that the Argentine Republic is a regional leader in the regulation of trans fats and that by December we will be a country free of trans fats. Four years ago, we modified the Argentine food code, which has the power of law. To do so, starting with the space established by the law and specific governmental entities, the fats in question would be replaced in accordance with the goal of ensuring that the State would neither produce nor market products containing fats derived from hydrogenated vegetable oils. We have also pursued a policy of reducing salt consumption through specific national legislation. We are enacting a national law on tobacco control and have updated diabetes legislation to expand coverage to all diabetic patients, including the provision of all medication without charge and without regard to type of diabetes.

As for tobacco use, I note that we started out in 2003 with a 40 per cent usage rate among the population over the age of 18. However, due to the attention focused on the situation, the rate had declined to 22.5 per cent by 2012, which is a major achievement. We have strengthened the epidemiological monitoring system for NCDs and accompanying risk factors, including mortality studies, chronic illness registries and national population surveys. Our national goals and indicators have contributed to regional indicators and the nine targets for 2025 regarding NCDs, established by the World Health Organization. In the near future, the national registry of cardiovascular diseases will begin operations; law 25.501, whereby the registry was established, has already helped to promote not only the collection of epidemiological data, but also the provision of timely, quality care in cases of acute heart attack before reaching a hospital and stroke.

The Argentine Republic is implementing a comprehensive and integrated strategy and an action plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. We face huge challenges, and we are aware that we need to broaden our policies in that area, including to many other sectors. Today, we are close to receiving the results of the third national survey of risk factors. The first survey took place in 2005, the second in 2009 and the survey that we are now processing and for which we are receiving the reports is from 2013. It will enable us to have a clearer picture of what is happening with the obesity epidemic in our country. We understand that that is a problem and challenge facing every country in the world, which will therefore require more robust and comprehensive public policies at the national, regional and global levels.

On the basis of the legitimacy that the achievements and developments in the health of Argentines bestow on us, we urge the States Members of the United Nations to draw up and implement policies that clearly include the regulation of food advertisements, to undertake actions that encourage the rational use of sugar, to promote measures to reduce the intake of unhealthy foods and to promote physical activity in our communities. We also call for actions to control the excessive use of alcohol and to deal with mental illnesses, such as that clearly seen in dementia.

While we are making progress, the road ahead is not easy. However, we know that we can succeed. We wish to draw the attention of Member States to the need to work vigorously for the prevention and early detection of neurocognitive impairment, which is evident in depression, dementia and other pathologies, as a result of the increased life expectancy of the elderly. If we fail to do that, we will miss an excellent opportunity to combat ills, such as overweight and obesity, that have affected our populations since the previous century but that in the twenty-first century have become a true epidemic with a serious impact on the harmonious development of our countries. As Member States, we cannot remain mere spectators of the demographic, epidemiological, biotechnological and cultural changes

that jeopardize the preservation of a decent quality of life for our citizens in the immediate future. We must therefore act with creativity and innovation to respond to those challenges, which are already a reality. The future is now, and there will be no future if we do not change our present.

In the Argentine Republic, we promote and call for inclusiveness, social development and the strengthening of the rights of our peoples through action on the social determinants of health and the entire range of tools that, together with civil society and the private sector, we can jointly develop and bring about. It is not just a health issue. It is an issue for each of us, since in a society we are jointly responsible for what happens to us. We have the ability to make decisions and to raise awareness among our communities so that, with active and concrete participation, we can together change the reality. Member States must be strengthened with a clear direction in integrated, comprehensive, intersectoral and sustainable public policies. That is how we can ensure that chronic non-communicable diseases no longer threaten the health of our peoples and their economies, forging a healthier, more equitable and socially fairer future.

Mr. Kostennikov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In 2013, Russia completed a two-year health sector modernization programme, which, at a total cost of $19 billion, was unprecedented for our country in scale and financial support. The priorities for modernizing the health system were to strengthen primary health-care services and to develop preventive care, including through the universal and large-scale medical examination of adults and children for the early detection of illnesses. Priority attention was given to improving the system of compulsory medical insurance.

The major result of all our efforts was an increase in the average life expectancy to 70.8 years and, for the first time since 1991, there has been natural population growth. That has happened in the context of a modest downturn in the birth rate. The population therefore increased owing to a reduction in the mortality rate. That instils confidence in us with regard to the effectiveness of our efforts.

We are increasingly participating in global health protection. Russia was one of the initiators of the international programmes for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and actively supports those international programmes. A real contribution of the Russian Federation to combating NCDs in low- and middle-income countries was the investment of more than $3 million in financing the WHO global project on healthy lifestyles and the prevention of non-communicable diseases. With the financial and technical support of the WHO and Russian experts, those countries have developed national action plans. Our upcoming plans include the opening of a WHO office for the prevention and control of NCDs in Moscow. The Government of the Russian Federation has allocated more than $22 million for that project.

In the past few years, the international community has made significant progress in combating NCDs through the adoption of global targets on countering the spread of NCDs, the development of a global monitoring framework to track progress and the endorsement of the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020. The Action Plan links the political commitments of Member States and the tools for practical implementation at the country level.

The WHO has recently agreed the terms of reference of the global coordination mechanism to facilitate the implementation of the Global Action Plan. It is important that the decision-making role within the global coordination mechanism be the preserve of Member States, which will involve the organizations of the United Nations system and non-State actors in that task. In our view, the global coordination mechanism could convene its meetings as forums, whose outcomes could be followed up and used as the main element of the progress report of the Director-General of the WHO on the implementation of the Global Action Plan. The first meeting of that forum could take place in 2017, as indicated in the terms of reference.

In the context of combating NCDs, we attach great importance to the upcoming Second International Conference on Nutrition, to be held in Rome from 19 to 21 November. We hope that its outcome will help to achieve the agreed indicators with regard to the prevention of obesity and the reduction in salt intake and in harmful alcohol use.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the Russian Federation fully supports the adoption of the outcome of the High-level Meeting (resolution 68/300) and the actions that it contains at the national and international levels to resolve the problem of non-communicable diseases.

Ms. Rahateng (Indonesia): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Deputy Minister of Health of Indonesia.

I would like to begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation for the President's exemplary leadership in organizing this High-level Meeting and thanking the Permanent Representatives of Belgium and Jamaica for their excellent facilitation of the consultations on modalities and the outcome document.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

With non-communicable diseases (NCDs) accounting for more than 60 per cent of deaths in my country, the Government of Indonesia is fully committed to scaling up efforts to prevent and control NCDs. At the national level, a national policy framework on NCD prevention and control, which includes promotion, preventive, curative, palliative and rehabilitative programmes, was initiated in 2011. Through consultation and partnership with all stakeholders at all levels, concrete action plans have been developed. As NCD control and prevention have now become an integral part of the development plan at the national and subnational levels, indicators for NCD prevention and control have also been included in the draft of the national midterm development plan of 2015-2019.

I take this opportunity to share with the General Assembly some lessons drawn from Indonesia's NCD prevention and control efforts. First, the role of community is key. NCDs play out in homes, in the workplace and in communities. Therefore, awareness and advocacy efforts begin at home and in ommunity. Accordingly, community-based interventions have been initiated throughout the country.

Secondly, providing access, services and coverage is of utmost importance. The Government of Indonesia reminds communities to ensure access for all to NCD-related services by continuously improving the quality and effectiveness of services at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. To ensure coverage for all citizens for such services, beginning in January 2014, the Government of Indonesia launched a national health insurance scheme.

Thirdly, with respect to collaboration and partnership, across sectors involving all stakeholders, several alliances have been formed, including national and regional alliances for tobacco and NCD control.

Fourthly, regulatory and institutional frameworks are imperative. Through cross-sector collaboration, the necessary legislation to strengthen the regulatory framework for NCD prevention and control has been enacted.

Given that this is a moment of critical change whereby Member States are being called further into the design of a post-2015 development agenda, the High-level Meeting is an opportune moment to further dialogue and refine the targets and indicators for NCDs. Forming the NCD targets in identifying its indicators in the next development agenda should aim for strengthening commitments and actions, in particular of the global effort to support national efforts to prevent and control NCDs, including by addressing the diverse and complex causes of epidemics. They should also be aimed at creating an enabling environment at the national and global levels to allow the transformation towards greater efficiency in NCD prevention and control, as well as an enhanced partnership that allows for better coordination and coherence across and within sectors.

It is also important that the provisions for enabling conditions for developing countries, including through the full use of the flexibility in the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and Public Health, be addressed in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr. Acurio (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since the new Government of the Citizens' Revolution took office, Ecuador has adopted a Constitution that has brought radical change to the country, in particular in terms of what we understand as development and the conception of development we seek. We Ecuadorians have asked ourselves what type of life we want and how we want to achieve the well-being of society. We have decided that no development can be described as sustainable if it does harm to the health and well-being of the human being. We have decided to change our vision of development, giving priority to the human being over capital.

It is impossible to speak of development if we do not change our concept of it. Development must be sustainable and focus on the well-being of the human being. In the quest for good living, health is the starting

and the ending point. We need health to live well and we need to live well for health. Using that approach, and with the leadership of our President, Rafael Correa, we have decided in our country to tackle, with an intersectoral perspective, the different determinants of health — improving access to basic services, housing conditions, nutrition conditions, physical exercise and environments — that can help to bring about a healthy life. We have assumed that public health should be cost-free and of high quality. It is a fundamental right; mercantile goods are not.

We are facing new health challenges that test world leaders seeking innovative ways of building societies that are united and fair and that generate health. The future demands that we have a different vision of development; we therefore need to change the present paradigm. We must broaden our vision of health. Otherwise, how are we going to achieve good living?

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are perhaps one of the major challenges we face at the world level. To confront them, we need first of all to expand the availability of healthy food, which is related to food sovereignty. Secondly, we need to promote fiscal policies. Thirdly, we need to regulate trade and marketing of products, such as tobacco and alcohol. Fourthly, we need to control foreign investment in processed foods and make the population aware of the harm done by their unhealthy consumption.

None of that will be possible if we do not recognize and strengthen the regulatory power of the State and its ability to govern, through regulations that see to it that legislative and regulatory frameworks that promote and protect health make health possible in all policies. Ecuador has progressed considerably on that subject by strengthening our national health authority and developing standards to ensure universal access to health care for the entire population, in which humanitarian health care is universal, free, comprehensive and equitable, based on a primary-care model and focusing on individual care and collective intervention.

Today in our country, we have a model of comprehensive health care, in the framework of which we have a national strategy for the prevention and control of cancer in its different expressions. In addition to that, we have implemented a policy that has allowed us to reduce tobacco consumption, increase taxes and absolutely prohibit tobacco use in all public spaces in the country.

We cannot claim to give a systematic answer to the new world health challenges without the leadership of our health institutions and authorities. The health sector needs to participate actively in intersectoral, national and international spaces for decision-making. We will thus be able to contribute to planning for sustainable development.

We would like to draw attention to the obesity epidemic that can be found today in all corners of our continent, without distinction to ethnicity or social condition. In our country alone, there are some 5 million persons who are overweight or obese and almost 9 per cent of our children under the age of 5 are showing signs of being overweight or obese. In other words, the situation is twice as bad as it was in 1986.

We need to stop processed industrial foods with little nutritional value and high in sugar, saturated fats, trans fats, salt and additives from penetrating our markets. The excessive use of those products and lack of physical activity threaten the very development of our populations. Ecuador would like to acknowledge the actions undertaken by the Government and legislators who have taken bold decisions to defend their citizens, boys and girls, by establishing regulatory measures such as taxes on sweet beverages, improvement of food in schools, introduction of clear front-labelling and control of abusive advertising of industrially processed foods.

In Ecuador, we recently approved regulations for labelling processed goods, allowing the user or consumer to identify the fat, sugar and salt content in all processed foods. We also have a new communication law which prohibits the advertising of alcohol and tobacco, which makes it possible for the health authorities to limit or prohibit commercials or advertising of any product that might affect public health. In addition, we have undertaken intersectoral actions, such as an interministerial agreement on school cafeterias. We have established a daily hour of physical exercise in schools.

Ecuador and other countries have thus made great progress in regulation, but a great deal more needs to be done than what we have done so far. We must set high goals; perhaps we will not be able to achieve our goals in the short term, but that is no reason to lower the bar of our aspirations. Chronic non-communicable diseases and the consumption of healthy food cannot just be a matter for the individual to decide; we must

understand the structural nature of the consumption of healthy food and the effect of the market, regulations, advertising and foreign investment in food.

The prevention and control of chronic non-communicable diseases requires that we turn to action. We must act on the socioeconomic factors for their existence and thus reduce the pressure that chronic diseases have on health systems.

Mr. Al-Sahlawi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a great honour for all of us to come together at this High-level Meeting to transparently and objectively review what has been achieved on the ground with respect to our commitment to fighting non-communicable diseases (NCDs) pursuant to the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (resolution 66/2, annex) in September 2011.

Kuwait understands the reach of the NCD problem and its ramifications for health systems and their impact on the quality of life. Since the adoption of the Political Declaration, we have started to implement the measures necessary to fight non-communicable diseases, integrating them into our national development plan for our country. We have mobilized all resources and stakeholders in order to wage the battle in all sectors. We have formed a high-level multisectoral committee under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, composed of specialists from different Government agencies and civil society, which has been dedicated to evaluating potential objective and cross-cutting change based on the Political Declaration and resolutions of the World Health Organization (WHO), in addition to decrees from the Ministers of Health in the Gulf Cooperation Council and the regional office of the WHO in the Middle East.

Through cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the different sectors, Kuwait has begun to reduce the salt content of bread by 20 per cent, which will have a positive impact on cardiovascular diseases. We have also taken a number of initiatives to deal with such risk factors as smoking and lack of physical exercise and other measures, and working with schools, including issuing a health manual for schools and encouraging sports activities in schools, continuing our commitment with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and in application of our Law No. 15 of 1995.

We have taken labelling measures and adopted regulations on tobacco and cigarettes. We have announced greater penalties for violations of those new regulations. We have also stepped up efforts to assist smokers in quitting the habit. Our Minister of Health has cooperated with all partners in society in organizing a conference on health awareness in that area.

We are also fighting non-communicable diseases and have established early-warning systems for the early detection of those diseases. We have established various clinics to fight those diseases. We have universal vaccination coverage against hepatitis. We have applied primary and rehabilitative health-care protocols. As part of our commitment also to addressing the leading causes of death and chronic disease, in cooperation with the WHO, we have undertaken surveys of adolescents, students and the elderly, using the latest scientific information to address causes of death and making use of the available indicators to monitor and assess progress.

Regionally, specifically at the level of the Arabian Gulf region, since January 2014 we have been implementing a document adopted to fight chronic non-communicable diseases as a priority. That text has been translated into reality as a vision for the Gulf region as a region free of the burdens of chronic non-communicable diseases. We were also proud to increase the pace of work to implement the United Nations Political Declaration through the regional meeting for the Middle East held in Kuwait in April 2013.

Kuwait also reiterates its commitment to the Political Declaration, to fighting non-communicable diseases and to working together with the international community. We are confident that we will fulfil the commitments we have undertaken, maintain our strong political will and make use of the lessons learned in the different international forums so that we may all achieve what we aspire to and mitigate the impact of the spread of chronic non-communicable diseases.

Mr. Burrows (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for having taken the initiative of organizing this High-level Meeting on a subject which is common to and affects the entire international community. My delegation supports the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Non-communicable diseases are a priority for the Government of Chile, since, as in many countries throughout the world, they are the main cause of death, disease and lost years of healthy life. Non-communicable diseases are a form of expression of social inequality because they are concentrated in poorer and less educated groups. It is possible, on the basis of gender, age, socioeconomic status and education, among others, to make differentiated assessments of the physical appearance and the efforts to take care of our bodies, strengthening the development of healthier or less healthy lifestyles. Therefore, non-communicable diseases cannot be considered and addressed only as a health-care problem, but rather must be addressed on the basis of the social factors, in accordance with the concept of health throughout all policies.

For all those reasons, public policy to address non-communicable diseases must consider its relevance vis-à-vis different factors. Such relevance underscores and values the community's customs, heritage, world views and ways of life, such as those associated with practices related to eating habits, alcohol and tobacco consumption, and physical activity, among others, with a view to understanding and respecting their sociocultural value, that is, the ways in which they are desired or appreciated, obtained or disposed of. Therefore, the effectiveness of public policies depends on their relevancy.

In Chile, for more than 15 years we have been implementing population and intersectoral policies to promote health in order to generate changes in behaviour and habits in a sociocultural and environmental context which limits the possibility of healthier choices. We have not achieved the desired results. In that context, we welcome the initiative of the United Nations to promote a more proactive role for States, laying the structural foundation for the creation of healthier environments, which are conducive to behavioural changes, and making it possible to reduce the prevalence of non-communicable diseases in the medium and long term.

Chile has also made progress in developing a regime of explicit health guarantees that ensures access to timely medical care with high standards and financial protection for 80 diseases, which have been given epidemiological priority, including cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and certain diseases that affect mental health. Inspired by the World Health Organization Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020, we also have a national health strategy which guides our health policies and programmes throughout the country with a horizon of 2020 and which has given priority to non-communicable diseases and their determining factors.

In structural and demographic terms, we have made progress on the commitments made in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, improving the current tobacco law to protect the rights of non-smokers through greater restriction in public spaces where smoking is allowed and by further restricting access to tobacco, especially among the youth. We have also added a zero-tolerance law for alcohol, reducing the permissible blood alcohol levels for drivers and increasing the penalties for violations. That has led to a decrease of almost 30 per cent in deaths caused by traffic accidents related to alcohol.

With regard to food, we have recently adopted a law that improves the labelling of foods by including warnings of excessive salt, saturated fat and sugar and indicating the energy levels associated with them. The labels are located prominently on the front of food packages. The same law restricts the advertising and sale of those foods in educational establishments.

Lastly, in order to improve the environment, today we have more bike paths and recreation areas, although significant gaps in coverage remain, especially in areas of lower socioeconomic status.

One of the challenges our country is facing is related to the achievement of a tax reform proposal, which is to be introduced soon, with tax increases for tobacco, alcohol, unhealthy foods and environmental pollutants. We are also making progress on an intersectoral agreement to strengthen the "Choose healthy living" strategy, which includes social participation through citizen forums and participatory dialogues to consider, throughout the action plan, the opinions of those who will be the subjects of the intervention, thereby avoiding imposition and reflecting their needs and demands.

We appreciate the call to create a turning point in the commitment to take action and to develop the global agenda on non-communicable diseases. Chile accepts that invitation and joins the political commitment that the United Nations has called for.

Ms. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, my delegation would like to thank Ms. Margaret Chan, Director General of the World

Health Organization (WHO), for her report on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

Nearly three years ago, our Heads of State and Government adopted a fundamental Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (resolution 66/2, annex) making it possible to highlight the scourge of our time, namely, the epidemic caused by non-communicable diseases — diseases which are primarily the result of smoking, alcoholism, a poor diet and a lack of physical activity, as well as the costs to which they give rise.

The WHO estimates that 85 per cent of the premature deaths of individuals between the ages of 30 and 70 years that took place in 2011 and were recorded in developing countries were attributable to non-communicable diseases, is simply frightening. The fact that globalization is creating deadly interactions between non-communicable diseases and communicable diseases in developing countries is an additional aggravating factor, while those countries struggle to implement the Millennium Development Goals. Added to the cost of human lives lost too early is the exorbitant economic cost, which slows or prevents growth and perpetuates the vicious cycle of chronic poverty. It is therefore essential to help those countries develop multisectoral strategies, as the report of the Director General indicates. The fight against tobacco and alcohol, the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity, together with access to treatment, makes it possible to reduce spending on public health.

The Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020 and the creation of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases will contribute to helping countries develop specific policies to collect data and to strengthen coordination at both the national and global levels and to ensure the necessary funding and cooperation.

The improvement of national capacity, as seen in the 2013 WHO global survey, is encouraging. Monaco recently participated in the first high-level meeting of the small States of Europe aimed at implementing the 2020 Health Plan. This new European framework policy of the WHO will strengthen health systems and revitalize public-health infrastructure and institutions by ensuring the participation of all relevant stakeholders, public and private.

We also welcome the initiatives undertaken by the WHO to forge strategic partnerships with the International Telecommunication Union, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Development Programme and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. These partnerships must contribute to data collection and the implementation of multisectoral national policies. Monaco has invested in public health both at the national level and within its international cooperation framework. The Principality has also partnered with the IAEA in the fight against cancer.

The prevention of and fight against non-communicable diseases will be an essential element of the post-2015 development agenda. The road map has been drawn up, and the efforts already undertaken must be intensified to guarantee that the 2018 comprehensive review will yield substantive progress. The Assembly can count on the commitment of the Principality of Monaco.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.